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ABSTRACT

Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) programs were implemented in 1998 in five states working with the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). SEDL's five-state region includes Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. This study examined the implementation status of CSR programs since funding ended. Two hundred and sixty-eight surveys were distributed to schools that received CSR funding. In addition, on-site visits were conducted to a sample of school in each state. School and student performance, as available, was also examined. This study examines the following four aspects of the Comprehensive School Reform programs: (1) Student performance; (2) Program components still in place ; (3) Factors contributing to program continuation; and (4)Information on the model provider. Appended are: CSR Models Used in Five States; Letters of Support from State Departments of Education; Site Visit Summaries; and Surveys. (Contains 26 tables and 4 graphs.) (Author)

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# Follow-up Study of Schools Implementing Comprehensive School Reform in the Southwest

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# Follow-up Study of Schools Implementing Comprehensive School Reform in the Southwest

**December 2003**

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**Prepared for Southwest Educational Development Laboratory by Academic Information Management, Inc., Austin, TX**



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# Follow-up Study of Schools Implementing Comprehensive School Reform
# Program Status

## Executive Summary

Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) programs were implemented in 1998 in five states working with the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). SEDL's five-state region includes Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. This study examined the implementation status of CSR programs since funding ended. Two hundred and sixty-eight surveys were distributed to schools that received CSR funding. In addition, on-site visits were conducted to a sample of school in each state. School and student performance, as available was also examined.

In 1997, Congress approved the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program, created to encourage schools nationwide to implement research-based, comprehensive, school-wide reform initiatives, especially in low-performing schools. With the passage of the 2001 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, CSRD is now known simply as Comprehensive School Reform or CSR (as it is no longer a "Demonstration" program). The program is regulated by the new CSR authority in Part F of ESEA'S Title I and the Fund for the Improvement of Education.

CSR schools in the states that SEDL serves have implemented a variety of reform models with 51 different models identified. The CSR program required schools to incorporate and address nine components related to school improvement. The goal of any CSR program is to produce long-term, lasting reforms in schools that result in sustained improvements in student performance. Assessing program continuation after start-up funding ended is essential to understanding the factors that affect program continuation, including funding sources, program support, staff training, and model provider support.

To assess the current status of each CSR program, survey questionnaires were developed and sent to all 268 CSRD-funded schools. The rate of return (approximately 40 percent) varied significantly by state from 23 percent in Texas to 75 percent in Arkansas. To supplement the mail surveys, site visits were conducted at fifteen schools. Only schools indicating a willingness to provide additional information and approved by the state education department were visited. School programs were selected to reflect different geographic locations, model types, school type, and student demographics. In addition to the survey and the on-site visits, selected published student performance data were examined.

Of the 106 returned surveys, 79 were from schools still implementing the original model, whereas 27 schools had discontinued the original CSR model. Where the program is still in place, about 70 percent said the entire program is still in place while 24 percent said about half is in place. Four main reasons were given for the program remaining in place:

successful student outcomes, alignment with school goals, continued funding, and strong support by teachers and parents. Successful student outcomes were the most important reason noted. These reasons for program continuation were also confirmed in the site visit interviews.

Site visit interviews indicated that many school have made a large investment in the CSR program. The comprehensive nature of many CSR models requires that a school make a large investment of time and money. Respondents in some schools said they lacked the desire or the energy to start a new program. Site visit interviews also revealed that program continuation is related to administrative and school staff support. In many instances, school principals were fully committed to ensuring continuation of the CSR model and school staff members felt that they had district support. Where programs were no longer in place, the primary reason centered on funding either in general or that the model was too expensive. Following in importance, respondents selected "did not have support by teachers or administrators," and "chose another program."

During site visits, opinions among interviewees varied regarding the degree to which diminished funding has reduced the effectiveness of CSR models. Although most agreed that the models are expensive to maintain, they also indicated that the expenses associated with the models have decreased since the first years of implementation. Many principals question how they will be able to sustain the model over time. Without continued funding, program staff are concern that models will be modified to such an extent that their effectiveness will be diminished.

Although funding was given most often as the reason for discontinuation, it is likely that the reason is more complicated. From the site visits and comments made on surveys, if the belief in the program was strong, so was the motivation (and success) to secure alternative funding sources. One of the major premises of any type of developmental program is building local capacity with a (presumed) reduction of direct (and expensive) support from the model provider. One component of the CSR program "Coordination of Resources" saw the largest difference between continuing and non-continuing programs with little coordination noted in the latter.

Survey respondents were generally pleased with the level of support that they received from the model providers and said that proper training, particularly in the first two years of implementation, was critical to the model's success. Fewer respondents where the program is no longer in place said that the quality of the model and support were excellent. In some cases, consultants provided informal help even after the CSR funding had ended.

To be considered successful, CSR programs must improve student achievement. While some schools' programs have not yet achieved expected results, respondents who choose to continue the CSR model believe the model will produce improved student achievement. Many school administrators said that first three years of implementation is not sufficient time to see marked changes in student performance. CSR programs are not limited to a particular model; nor are any one goal common in all models. Allowing



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emphases to be placed where appropriate leads to a diversity of approaches and models. While this contributes to the strength of a general program such as CSR, it also complicates the issue of measuring student performance.

Although the success of a reform model can be measured in a variety of ways_enhanced professional development, increased and improved instructional resources, and reduction in staff turnover_most success measures involve the student. Typical student outcomes include increased self-esteem, greater classroom participation, and higher test scores. The term "success" is dependent on what is trying to be accomplished by the program. Externally-defined success, such as graduation rates, may overlap with the internal measure, but are defined by the state. In some cases, this external definition of success may conflict with the internal goals of the program.

A critical precursor for any effort to increase student performance is to have measurable goals and objectives so that progress may be ascertained in a concrete, impartial manner. In schools where the model continues, 83 percent of survey respondents indicated that they have developed measurable goals and benchmarks as compared to 67 percent in non-continued programs.

Nearly all (98 percent) of respondents in schools where the CSR model is still in place noted a positive impact on student achievement. Even in sites where the model is no longer used, 88 percent reported a positive impact. Moreover, respondents identified a correlation between the quality of the model and whether the program was still being implemented in 2003.

Data obtained from all Texas schools that implemented a CSR program indicate that students in these schools made significant gains in performance from 1998 to 1999; however, by 2001, those schools' performance had dropped to approximately the same level as economically disadvantaged students in the state overall. (In Texas, the percentage of economically disadvantaged student is greater in CSR schools than in the state in general.)

The range of educational reform models adopted by schools receiving CSR grants suggests that a variety of needs–and, therefore, a range of outcomes–were important to school staff. Accordingly, desired outcomes and approaches differed among schools implementing the same model, whereas similar outcomes were often within the goals of CSR schools implementing different models. The absence of a common goal or standardized measure limits this study's capacity to generalize about the overall impact of the CSR program. Several schools implemented more than one model (usually two) operating concurrently. The degree of emphasis on each model has varied from time to time, with one model taking precedence over the other as the importance of outcomes shifted. One school that implemented four programs at one time, now has none.

All respondents were asked to describe the most important changes in their schools that resulted from their CSR program. Several positive results were identified, both for schools with models still in place and for those no longer in place. None of the



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respondents indicated that negative changes have occurred as a result of implementing the CSR program. Respondents of both survey types said that the CSR program had a positive impact on professional development.

Respondents from continuing schools said that several positive changes have taken place as a result of the CSR program. Changes include improved student performance, valuable staff development, improved teaching strategies, greater availability of resources and materials, increased teacher and school staff morale, and increased parental and community involvement.

**Study Highlights**

- 106 of 288 surveys were returned. Of these, 79 were from schools that are still implementing the original model, 27 were from schools that had discontinued the original CSR model. In schools where the program is still in place, about 70 percent said the entire program is still in place while 24 percent said about half is in place.

- Four main reasons were given for the program remaining in place: successful student outcomes, alignment with school goals, continued funding, and strong support by teachers and parents.

- The comprehensive nature of many CSR models requires that a school make a large investment of time and money. Because of this three-year large investment, many schools and staff were reluctant to discontinue the program.

- The majority of respondents agreed that CSR programs are expensive to implement and maintain. Although most agreed that the models are expensive to maintain, they also indicated that the expenses associated with the models have decreased since the first years of implementation.

- Though many programs continued to secure funding, several principals were unsure regarding future funding for their programs. Many principals question how they will be able to sustain the model over time. Without continued funding, program staff are concerned that models will be modified to such an extent that their effectiveness will be diminished.

- Although funding was given most often as the reason for discontinuation, funding was found to be related to perceived program success. If the belief in the program was strong, so was the motivation (and success) to secure alternative funding sources.

- Survey respondents were generally pleased with the level of support that they received from the model providers and said that proper training, particularly in the first two years of implementation, was critical to the model's success.

- While some schools' programs have not yet achieved expected student performance results, respondents who choose to continue the CSR model believe the model will produce improved student achievement. Many school administrators said that first three years of implementation are not sufficient time to see marked changes in student performance.

- Program staff indicated several positive program outcomes: improved student performance, increased student and staff self-esteem, greater classroom participation, higher test scores, valuable staff development, improved teaching strategies, greater availability of resources and materials, increased teacher and school staff morale, and increased parental and community involvement."

- Nearly all (98 percent) of respondents in schools where the CSR model is still in place noted a positive impact on student achievement. For schools that discontinued the program, 88 percent reported a positive impact.

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# 1.
# Follow-up Study of Schools Implementing Comprehensive School Reform Programs: Status Report

Schools in Southwest Educational Development Laboratory's (SEDL) five-state region implemented Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) programs in 1998. SEDL's region includes Arkansas (26 sites), Louisiana (64 sites), New Mexico (21 sites), Oklahoma (30 sites), and Texas (137 sites). Not all of these 278 original sites continued their CSR programs through their three-year funding cycle. This study examines the following four aspects of the CSR programs:

- Student performance
- Program components still in place
- Factors contributing to program continuation
- Information on to the model provider

Academic Information Management, Inc. developed this report using information obtained from a mail survey, school performance data, and site visits conducted at schools in all five states.

**Background**

The 1993 RAND Corporation's publication, *Federal Policy Options for Improving the Education of Low Income Students, Volume I: Findings and Recommendations,* suggested that the impact of the federal government's Title I programs targeting schools with a majority of low income students would be greater if educators implemented schoolwide reform initiatives instead of selective programs. Based on this and other research conducted in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Title I program, in the 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), encouraged schoolwide initiatives among schools in which at least half of the students were disadvantaged.

In 1997, Congress approved the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program to encourage schools nationwide to implement research-based, comprehensive, schoolwide reform initiatives, especially in low performing schools. The majority of schools were awarded approximately $50,000. The CSRD program required schools to incorporate and address nine components related to school improvement: (1) employing proven, scientifically based methods; (2) integrating comprehensive and aligned curricula; (3) developing measurable goals; (4) attaining and ensuring administrative, teacher, and parental support; (5) providing staff development; (6) including meaningful parental and community involvement; (7) using external technical assistance resources; (8) employing effective program evaluation techniques; and (9) producing increased student performance results. With the passage of the 2001 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, CSRD is now known simply as Comprehensive School Reform or CSR (as it is no longer a "Demonstration" program). The program is regulated by the new CSR authority in Part F of ESEA'S Title I and the Fund for the Improvement of Education.

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**Need for the Study**

SEDL has conducted research on the efforts of several CSR programs in the states that SEDL serves: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Through several articles (*CSRD Connections, SEDL Letter*) and publications, and through the creation of the CSR Web site (http://www.sedl.org/csrd/), SEDL has been involved in research and evaluation, training, and information dissemination on CSR programs.

In 2003, SEDL contracted with Academic Information Management, Inc. (AIM), to conduct a one-year status/evaluation study of CSR programs after the three-year federal funding cycle ended. The primary purposes of this study were to ascertain the status of education reform models formerly supported by CSR funds and to assess the long-term status of CSR programs implemented in the five states that SEDL serves. This report addresses two main research issues:

1) To assess the overall implementation status of CSR programs after federal funding ended and the specific reasons that schools chose to continue or discontinue their programs.
2) To assess the actual and perceived impact of CSR programs on student performance, staff capacity, and other school-level outcomes.

The goal of any CSR program is to produce long-term, lasting reforms in schools that result in sustained improvements in student performance. Assessing program continuation after start-up funding has ended is essential to understanding the factors that affect program continuation, including funding sources, program support, staff training, and model provider support. Researching, identifying and understanding the successes achieved by these programs is important in encouraging schools to continue investing in these long-term schoolwide reform efforts.

**CSR Models and the Schools Involved in this Study**

This report does not provide in-depth descriptions of the models implemented in the schools surveyed for this study. Evaluations of the specific reform models are beyond the study's scope. Many organizations have cataloged and described these models. The SEDL Web site provides links to several of these organizations. A publication by the American Institutes for Research, *An Educator's Guide to School Reform* (1999), catalogs 24 schoolwide reform models and the National Clearinghouse for School Reform and the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory produced *The Catalog of School Reform Models* (last updated in September 2002). This publication provides descriptions for 64 reform models.

Originally, 278 schools implemented a variety of CSR models in the states that SEDL serves. Of these, 268 implemented a CSR model for at least the three-year funding cycle. Approximately 51 CSR models were used. The top five models implemented were Accelerated Schools, Help One Student to Succeed (HOSTS), Success for All, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), and Direct Instruction. Appendix A lists all the reform models implemented in these schools. Table 1 displays, by state, the number of schools surveyed and the number of models identified in the returned surveys.

**Table 1. Number of Schools in Study and CSR Models Identified**

| State | Number of Schools Included in Study | Number of Models Identified in Survey |
|---|---|---|
| Arkansas | 24 | 12 |
| Louisiana | 54 | 20 |
| New Mexico | 21 | 8 |
| Oklahoma | 32 | 6 |
| Texas | 137 | 37 |
| **Total** | **268** | 51 |

The study included 163 elementary schools, 57 middle schools, 31 high schools, and 17 schools with multiple grade levels (e.g., K–8). The number of schools in the study differs from the original number of schools participating in CSR because some schools did not complete the three-year funding cycle.

**Study Design**

To assess the status of reform models formerly supported by CSR program funds, this study attempted to determine the extent to which models were fully implemented and the elements that led to program continuation. At the time of this study, the original funding from CSR had ceased. This circumstance has complicated the ability to obtain data because, in some cases, the personnel originally associated with the CSR program are no longer with the school that implemented the model. In addition, programs often did not retain data or other information that would be pertinent to this study.

To obtain the most useful information possible, given limited data availability in many cases, AIM used a three-pronged approach. The study involved (1) mail surveys to 268 participating schools in the five states that SEDL serves; (2) follow-up phone calls to a small sample of schools to clarify information provided in surveys; (3) site visits to a sample of those schools; and (4) published data. The three viewpoints lent rigor to the study's information sources and contributed uniquely to its findings. General information regarding the study methodology, such as the number of surveys sent and returned, the number and location of on-site visits, and sources for published data are included in this section. Analysis and synthesis of the collected information appear later in this report.

*Limitations and Generalizability*

There are three primary limitations to the generalizability and applicability of the information provided in this report. The first is the survey return rate. Although a survey was distributed to all programs that were funded during 1998-2001, not all responded. There was an overall return rate of approximately 40 percent; however, the return rate varied by state. While the overall return rate is sufficient to produce reliable findings, there is a potential bias in that programs that did not return a survey may have a unique viewpoint related to discontinued programs. Mitigating this bias, however, is that several surveys were returned from schools that had discontinued the CSR program.

A second limitation concerns the lack of student performance data directly attributable to schools that implemented a CSR program. The availability of student performance data in Texas schools,



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however, where the majority of CSR programs were implemented, provides sufficient data to examine the general impact of the programs.

A third limitation regards the amount of time that had passed before information was collected concerning the programs. In some cases, two years had passed since CSR funding ended. In these cases, school administrators had to recollect events that had occurred two years before. While many schools still employed administrators that were associated with the original CSR programs, some schools reported that the school or district no longer employed persons familiar with the program.

*Surveys*

To assess the current status of each CSR program, researchers developed two types of survey questionnaires. The first, "Survey Yes," was designed for schools still implementing the CSR-funded model at least partially as of 2002–03. "Survey No" was developed for schools no longer implementing the original CSR-funded model. (Questionnaires for both surveys are included in Appendix D.) All schools received both types, with instructions for participants to select the appropriate questionnaire. Before mailing, a code was entered on each questionnaire that would allow identification of the respondent's state and the model the school had implemented. Each survey package included a separate card for respondents to complete if they were willing to provide additional information on their school's CSR program. Researchers conducted follow-up telephone interviews to some schools that were willing to supplement the information received in the surveys. Approximately 20 phone calls were made to clarify information received in the survey.

The number of surveys distributed corresponds to the number of programs and addresses provided by each state education department contact person. The number of schools identified in 2003 differs slightly from the number of programs originally funded, based on contact information provided by each state.

The departments of education for each of the five states provided a cover letter explanation for the survey packages, which were mailed to schools in Arkansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas in March 2003. Sample letters are included in Appendix B. These schools returned their surveys in April. Louisiana surveys were distributed in early April and returned by the end of the month. Surveys were sent to the school and to a district contact person. Information for the program contact person in the state department of education, SEDL, and AIM was included for respondents who might need help or clarification. Each package also included a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning the completed questionnaires to AIM, where response information was entered into a spreadsheet program for further analysis. Open-ended (or free response) questions were tabulated and incorporated into the analysis.

*Survey Return Rate*

Table 2 shows, by state, the number of surveys that were distributed and returned. In total, 268 surveys were distributed and 106 were completed and returned, for an overall return rate of 40 percent. (In the opinion of the evaluation team, a return rate of about 40 percent is what could be expected from programs that have not received CSR funds for two years.) The rate of return varied from state to state. Texas schools had the lowest return rate (23 percent), followed by

Louisiana (48 percent). Higher return rates were obtained from Arkansas (75 percent), New Mexico (62 percent), and Oklahoma (56 percent).

**Table 2. Number of Surveys Distributed and Returned**

| State | Number of Surveys Distributed | Surveys Returned | Overall Percentage Returned (%) | Percentage Agreeing to Be Contacted by Researchers (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arkansas | 24 | 18 | 75 | 75 |
| Louisiana | 54 | 26 | 48 | 31 |
| New Mexico | 21 | 13 | 62 | 54 |
| Oklahoma | 32 | 18 | 56 | 47 |
| Texas | 137 | 31 | 23 | 83 |
| Total | 268 | 106 | 40 | 53 |

Table 2 shows that more than half of the schools responding to the survey returned a postcard indicating their willingness to provide further information about their CSR program. There is variation by state in the willingness to provide further information to researchers about CSR programs. (While not strictly part of the survey results, this level of willingness indicates that the respondents were interested in providing useful information about their schools' programs and suggests that many may be program proponents.)

Respondents did not answer all survey questions. As a result, the numbers of total responses per question differ. Due to rounding, percentages will not equal 100 in all cases.

*Survey Respondents*

Table 3 shows that the majority of respondents, nearly half, are principals; whereas, nearly one-quarter are program coordinators. Nearly two-thirds of respondents have been employed at the school for more than five years, and fewer than 10 percent had been at the school for less than two years. The majority of respondents were likely to have been at the school during the time period when the CSR program was in place and to have an understanding of the models that were implemented. Tables 2 and 3 combine information from both Yes and No surveys. The majority of the remaining tables report findings for the two survey types separately. An analysis was not conducted to determine differences in opinions between principals and other school staff. Almost 60 percent of respondents were principals or assistant principals.

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**Table 3. Classification of Respondents by Number of Years in the School**

| Position | Less than 2 Years | 3 to 5 Years | More than 5 Years | Row Total | Col Percent (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Principal | 5 | 16 | 31 | 52 | 49.1 |
| Program coordinator | 0 | 6 | 16 | 22 | 20.8 |
| Teacher | 2 | 3 | 7 | 12 | 11.3 |
| Assistant principal | 1 | 4 | 6 | 11 | 10.4 |
| Other | 1 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 8.5 |
| Column total | 9 | 31 | 66 | 106 | 100.0 |

*Site Visits*

To supplement the mail surveys of CSR schools, researchers conducted site visits in each participating state. Fifteen sites were selected to receive visits from a group of schools that indicated a willingness to provide additional information for this study. The number of visits was proportional to the number of programs in each state, except in Louisiana, where only one site visit was conducted. School sites were selected to reflect different geographic and/or student demographics in these states (except Louisiana). CSR state department representatives were asked to participate in the site visit selection process. To obtain different view points, site visits included schools where the CSR program was still in place and school where the program model was discontinued. A variety of CSR models were included in the sites selected. Urban and rural school districts were visited. The sites visited are listed in Table 4

**Table 4. Sites Receiving Visits as Part of CSR Status Study**

| State | District | Grade Span | Model(s) | Current Program Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arkansas | Jonesboro | Elementary | Success for All | Continuing |
| Arkansas | Little Rock | Elementary | Reading Recovery, Futurekids (changed to AlphaSmart) | Continuing, with Early Literacy |
| Louisiana | Gretna | Elementary | Co-Nect | Continuing |
| New Mexico | Albuquerque | Elementary | Design for Literacy | Continuing |
| New Mexico | Bernalillo | Elementary | Success for All | Continuing |
| Oklahoma | Lawton | Elementary | Success for All | Continuing |
| Oklahoma | Tulsa | Middle | Integrated Teaching Instruction, Great Expectations (changed to Success for All) | Discontinued |
| Texas | Austin | High | Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) | Continuing |
| Texas | Cypress-Fairbanks | Middle | Creating Independence through Student-owned Strategies (CRISS), AVID | Significant portion continues |
| Texas | Edinburg | High | AVID | Continuing |
| Texas | Fort Bend | Middle | Second Generation Effective Schools, Mastery in Learning, Second Chance Reading, Just Read! | Partially continuing |
| Texas | Lubbock | Junior High | AVID | Continuing |
| Texas | Plainview | High (dropout recovery/ prevention) | PLATO | Continuing |
| Texas | San Antonio | Middle | Co-Nect, changed to Problem-Based Learning | Discontinued |
| Texas | Ysleta | Elementary | El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence | Continuing |

The AIM site visit team conducted a one-day site visit to each of the 15 participating schools. Each school received a copy of the interview protocol prior to the visit to make the process more efficient. During the site visits, several staff members were interviewed: principals, program coordinators, teachers, district administrators, and others familiar with the CSR program. The four members of the AIM site visit team were all experienced in interviewing school district

personnel. Although the interview protocols aided in guiding and focusing their interview processes, the team explored additional topics, as appropriate. Appendix C presents summaries of each site visit. Appendix D includes copies of the interview protocols.

*Analysis of School Performance Data*

To assess the overall performance of schools that received CSR funding, researchers analyzed school performance data by state. All states in the study have published longitudinal student performance data. However, not all available data were useful for this study. In three states, appropriate grade level data were not available at the time of this study's publication, or the available data were based on tests from different grade levels or where the passing standard had changed. Several schools could not provide local objective performance data for the years that the program was implemented.

School performance data from Arkansas were available at the school level. However, changes in the grade levels tested over the time period of interest limited the utility of the information. The most complete set of data was available in Texas. The 14–year old Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) yields a relatively consistent set of data. The AEIS data allowed researchers to examine test scores, advanced course completion, and dropout and attendance rates. This information, provided by the Texas Education Agency, was taken from complete AEIS reports for all campuses in the state. These data are discussed in the performance chapter of this report.

## 2.
## Program Implementation Status

This chapter presents findings from the three study components—surveys, site visits, and analyses of published student performance data. As noted previously, the study sought to ascertain the current program implementation status of education reform models formerly funded by CSR. Implementation status is presented first, followed by a summary of reasons for continuing programs reported by schools with models still in place. Finally, a summary of reasons for model discontinuation is presented.

Table 5 shows that 79 schools returned surveys indicating that models formerly funded by CSR are still being implemented (Survey Yes), whereas 27 schools returned surveys indicating that models are no longer used (Survey No). Survey No results should be interpreted with caution because only 27 such surveys were returned. On the other hand, with three times as many respondents, findings from Survey Yes have a greater assurance of applicability.

**Table 5. Program Implementation Status**

| State | Number of Surveys Distributed | Surveys Returned | Programs Still in Place (Number of Survey Yes Returned) | Programs No Longer in Place (Number of Survey No Returned) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arkansas | 24 | 18 | 18 | 0 |
| Louisiana | 54 | 26 | 14 | 12 |
| New Mexico | 21 | 13 | 11 | 2 |
| Oklahoma | 32 | 18 | 13 | 5 |
| Texas | 137 | 31 | 23 | 8 |
| Total | 268 | 106 | 79 | 27 |

Respondents rated the extent to which models previously funded by the CSR program, as originally implemented, were still in place in each school in 2002–03. Table 6 shows that more than two-thirds of the schools that are still implementing models are continuing to use the models as originally implemented. Another quarter of respondents reported that about half of the model is still in place. Although the majority of respondents continue to implement the model two years after CSR funding ended, some have made significant modifications and have continued to implement only certain aspects of the original model.

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**Table 6. Percentage of CSR-funded Models Still Being Implemented in Schools**

| Status | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Entire CSR program is currently in place | 56 | 69.1 |
| About half of the CSR program is currently in place | 19 | 23.5 |
| Only a small portion the CSR program is currently in place | 6 | 7.4 |

In schools where CSR-funded models are still in place, 71 percent (55 schools) reported that the staff person responsible for originally implementing the CSR program is still employed by the school, whereas 22 schools indicated that this staff person was no longer there. Two respondents reported that they did not know whether the staff person who originally implemented the program was still employed by the school. By contrast, half of respondents from schools where CSR programs have been discontinued said that original staff members responsible for implementing the program were still employed in that school, and half said that they were no longer there. Although this would seem to suggest that CSR programs are less likely to continue if the people who originally implemented them are no longer with schools, it cannot be absolutely stated that this is the case, as there are many factors (such as funding) that may also strongly determine whether models continue to be used.

Percentages of respondents indicating that their school's CSR-funded model is still in place in its entirety vary among states. Table 7 shows that slightly more than half of Oklahoma respondents said that models were still in place, whereas 75 percent of respondents from Arkansas said that they were still in place.

**Table 7. Program Status by State for Programs Still in Place (Survey Yes)**

| State | Original Program in Place | | About Half in Place | | Small Portion in Place | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Percentage (%) | Number | Percentage (%) | Number | Percentage (%) |
| Arkansas | 12 | 75.0 | 2 | 12.5 | 2 | 12.5 |
| Louisiana | 9 | 69.2 | 4 | 30.8 | 0 | 0 |
| New Mexico | 7 | 63.6 | 4 | 36.4 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Oklahoma | 6 | 54.5 | 4 | 36.4 | 1 | 9.1 |
| Texas | 22 | 73.3 | 5 | 16.7 | 3 | 10.0 |

**Reasons for Program Continuation**

Through the surveys and the site visits, researchers documented several reasons for model continuation. Table 8 lists the reasons provided for program continuation by Survey Yes respondents and people interviewed during site visits as to why their school's model is still in place, either in whole or in part. (Survey respondents were given the opportunity to check more than one reason they believe the reform model is still being implemented.)

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The most important reason for continuation reported by survey respondents relates to successful student outcomes. The second most important reason is the CSR program's alignment with school goals.

**Table 8. Reasons Given for Program Continuation (Survey Yes and Site Visits)**

| **Survey Yes** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Reasons** | **N Times Checked** | **N of "Most Important"** |
| Successful student outcomes | 72 | 45 |
| CSR program aligned with school goals | 61 | 8 |
| Funding provided by local (other) funds | 59 | 2 |
| Strong teacher and administrator support | 52 | 6 |
| Strong parental support | 48 | 0 |
| **Site Visits** | | |
| More cohesive and comprehensive curriculum | | |
| Increased teacher accountability | | |
| Large investment in time and money | | |
| Improved staff development | | |
| Desire to give program time to show results after significant three-year investment. | | |
| Opportunities for students that otherwise would not be available | | |

Responses to open-ended survey questions support the findings in Table 8. All respondents who answered the open-ended questions reported that successful student performance measures (improved student test scores, increased class participation) were the main reason that models continue to be implemented. According to one respondent, ". . . Improved student performance and alignment with school goals are both most important . . ." Another indicated that the model helps the school meet its accountability growth targets. Several respondents said that improved student performance was one main reason that funding was still available. Regarding strong staff and teacher support, one respondent noted, "Collaborative teaching strategies have been taken on by many teachers."

Site visits confirmed the findings reported above. Several interviewees said that improved student success is the primary reason for a model's continuation. A number of principals, teachers, and program facilitators strongly believe that the use of these models has improved overall student achievement. Interviewees also noted that using a particular model has improved student discipline and increased parental involvement. One teacher said, "It's a lot of hard work, but we're seeing results. It's sequenced in a way that we know what we're doing and we know what we're looking for." The site visit summaries included in Appendix C provide comments that are more detailed. Detailed, expanded site visit summaries were also prepared as a separate document.

Other important reasons for continuation emerged from the site visits. The comprehensive nature of many reform models requires that a school implementing it must make a large investment. Programs such as Success for All (SFA) and Design for Literacy require whole school reform.



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Some schools visited by AIM had been completely restructured. Changes included curriculum restructuring, staff development and teacher allocations, scheduling, and establishing program libraries. In several cases, the CSR-funded model had been used to develop the school's performance goals.

After large investments of both time and money, respondents in many schools said they lacked the desire or the energy to start a new program. For some models, large investments already in place—instructional materials, classroom arrangements, staff development, and staff and parental support, for example—ensure continuation. Some interviewees said that there were "no plans whatsoever" to change or to discontinue implementing their school's CSR model. One principal in New Mexico stated that, with or without funding, "we are committed to continuing this program." In schools with such commitment, staff members believe that CSR models have positively impacted the instructional culture of the school. A coordinator from an Oklahoma school indicated that the SFA program has become "internalized" there. Over time, the teachers have become fully aligned with SFA. When school personnel hire new teachers, they interview for SFA compatibility. The SFA model providers have become their friends. According to this coordinator, "no matter what," the school will continue to use the model: "We are SFA."

Despite a significant investment and a strong commitment to continuing a model, several site visit interviewees reported that their schools have not yet achieved the level of improved student performance that they had expected. In many instances, student performance on state-level exams does not necessarily reflect a model's success. Nevertheless, the majority of interviewees felt that use of the model selected for their schools would eventually increase student performance. In these instances, school staff members noted that it has taken two to four years for these comprehensive models to be fully implemented. In some schools, interviewees wanted to give the program a "five-year test," allowing the original group (e.g., first grade students) to go all the way (e.g., through grade 5), being taught via the model. For one school implementing the Advancement via Student Determination (AVID) program, a college-bound program for entering high school freshmen, 2003 marked the first AVID graduating class as well as the year that CSR funding ended. Although CSR programs were ending after their allotted time spans, the majority of the site visit schools had established long-term commitments to the model (and to the students participating in the model) that went beyond the three-year funding period. This commitment to continuation was evident, regardless of whether additional funding had been secured for continuation of a school's model.

Site visit interviews also revealed that continuation is related to administrative and school staff support. In many instances, school principals were fully committed to ensuring continuation of the CSR model and, in all instances where models were still in place, school staff members felt that they had district support to continue them.

Some principals and teachers noted that efforts toward school restructuring have resulted in better schools. Principals said that teachers had become more accountable. For some models, even though the implementation transition period was difficult for them, teachers perceived themselves as being better teachers and felt that the overall school curriculum and instructional approach were more comprehensive and cohesive. Several teachers said that they felt less isolated because more coordination now exists as a result of implementing their selected model.

Some interviewees had a strong commitment to CSR models not involving whole school reform. For example, AVID and PLATO programs—not currently targeting an entire school population—are perceived by staff members as positively affecting performance of students who participate. Staff members observed that these programs provide opportunities to students that would not otherwise be available. The majority of interviewees felt that they would like to see implementation of the model expand to include the entire school.

Respondents from some schools, although keenly aware of the lack of funds, felt that these programs were so ingrained in the school structure, system, and culture that it would be impossible to "revert back" to a program that did not include the reform model. In these instances, district funds, along with other local and federal funding sources, continue to support the models.

**Reasons for Program Discontinuing**

As noted, respondents from schools no longer implementing their CSR model were asked to return a version of the survey questionnaire tailored for schools that discontinued the CSR model (Survey No). Of the 106 surveys that were returned, 27 were the Survey No version. These respondents provided the most important reasons that their schools had chosen to discontinue the models implemented through the CSR program. Only two of the schools AIM visited had discontinued their models (Co-Nect, Great Expectations, and Integrated Teaching Instruction).

Table 9 provides a summary of respondents' reasons why models were discontinued. The two options selected most frequently relate to program funding and costs: "Did not obtain local (or other) funding" and "too expensive to continue." Following in importance, respondents selected "Did not have support of teachers or administrators," and "Chose another program."

A few respondents indicated that, over time, the model originally selected for their school proved to be inappropriate for the school. One noted that the program was discontinued because the materials were never made available in Spanish, stating, "I do believe that if a program had been chosen that included a Spanish component, the CSR grant would have had positive effects in the areas of student achievement and parental involvement."

The number 1 reason (improved student performance) Survey Yes respondents gave for continuation of their model (Table 8) appears toward the bottom of the list of reasons given by Survey No respondents when asked why their school's model was no longer in place (Table 9). Therefore, some discontinued models may actually have been producing desired student outcomes (see the student performance section of this report).

**Table 9. Reasons Given for Program Discontinuation (Survey No and Site Visits)**

| Reasons | N Times Checked | N of "Most Important" |
|---|---|---|
| Did not obtain local (or other) funding | 14 | 4 |
| Too expensive to continue | 8 | 3 |
| Did not have support by teachers of administrators | 4 | 0 |
| Chose another model | 4 | 0 |
| Did not obtain good support from model provider | 3 | 1 |
| Did not have strong parental support | 3 | 0 |
| Did not achieve successful student outcomes | 2 | 1 |
| Do not know why program was discontinued | 1 | 0 |
| Do not need any longer | 1 | 0 |
| Did not have adequate leadership | 1 | 0 |
| Did not align with school goals | 0 | 0 |

Responses to open-ended survey questions also indicate that lack of funding and program support are the two most important reasons for discontinuing a model. Reasons such as change in district leadership or school board members, or the hiring of a new school principal not supportive of the model, were given to explain the model's discontinuation. Several respondents reported that their school's model was too expensive to support. One noted, "For the money spent, we did not get the results we expected." Another reported that the school "did not obtain adequate or quality support from the model provider."

Two site visits were conducted at schools with discontinued CSR model. A Texas school implemented Co-Nect during the first year of its grant. Thereafter, the school used Problem-Based Learning (PBL), a reform model supported by the Region 20 Education Service Center. Federal CSR funds and Title I funds were used during the first year to purchase computers, software, materials for classroom libraries, and professional development. Second– and third–year funds were used for computers and software and to implement PBL.

The site visit team observed several differences in this school compared to other schools with models still in place. The two most important differences reflect the findings from the Survey Yes results shown in Table 8. The reform model in this school was not comprehensive, and it did not receive strong support from the school's administration. Although several teachers were trained to implement PBL, only a few continue to use these strategies in the classroom. Implementation of this model did not require the school to undergo a comprehensive restructuring, nor did it require the school to significantly alter its instructional approach. The same level of commitment, involvement, and school transformation observed with some programs like AVID, Success for All, and Design for Literacy was not evident in this school. When new campus and district administrators began revising goals, the school was not able to maintain the model. According to the coordinator, it "fell by the wayside" because the district leadership did not embrace the school's initiative. This school represents a contrast to other schools discussed previously, where there was a strong commitment to the CSR program, and where the school staff worked as a team to implement CSR model. This school did not experience a strong, early and ongoing commitment to the CSR program.

The second site visit was conducted at a Oklahoma school that discontinued the model primarily for reasons related to funding and the district's belief that students had not made sufficient progress. In addition, the district implemented a local reform model, the Tulsa Reads program, to try to put all schools on "the same page."

Respondents from schools that had discontinued their models were asked to provide information about when their models were most recently used in the schools. Table 10 presents the years reported.

**Table 10. Year CSR Model Was Last Used**

| School Year | Number of Respondents |
|---|---|
| 1999–2000 | 9 |
| 2000–2001 | 11 |
| 2001–2002 | 2 |
| 2002–2003 | 1 |

**Funding for Continuation**

Funding has affected models implemented through CSR grants in various ways. During site visits, all interviewees agreed that, without their three-year CSRD program grants, it is unlikely that they would have ever implemented models. The initial three-year grant allowed schools to make much needed, schoolwide investments involving materials, restructuring, and staff development. On average, grantees received approximately $50,000 per year. This level of funding allowed schools to implement expensive reform models.

When Survey Yes respondents were asked how post-CSR continuation of their schools' models was funded, they responded somewhat incompletely. For example, when describing their schools' funding sources, respondents often divided percentages among the three categories (local, federal, and other) in a fashion that did not add to 100 percent. On average, their reported funding sources were split thusly: 48 percent local, 38 percent federal (i.e., Title I), and 10 percent other funds (e.g., grants).

During site visits, opinions among interviewees varied regarding the degree to which diminished funding has eroded the effectiveness of CSR models. Although most agreed that the models are expensive to maintain, they also indicated that the expenses associated with the models have decreased since the first years of implementation. That is, current costs are less than initial implementation costs. A few respondents indicated that, as their school's model continues from year to year, it costs less to maintain. According to one, "initial costs have dropped dramatically …" Another noted that "next year, the program will be placed on maintenance; this is less expensive, since the use of a consultant will not be done on a monthly basis."

Creative hiring constitutes one of the ways schools keep models in place. One school hires four quarter-time retired certified teachers to ensure that students receive the one-on-one reading instruction required by programs such as Design for Literacy. A district secured private funding (a grant from the Dell Computer Company) to continue and expand the AVID model to all district high schools.

On the other hand, although many principals felt that their school's model had not yet suffered from the lack of funds, they are questioning how they will be able to sustain the model over time. All have begun to "cut corners" to ensure that the model can continue. Slightly increasing student-teacher ratios, decreasing staff development, and purchasing fewer instructional materials are the top three areas that principals and coordinators reported modifying. Some staff members fear that models will be changed to such an extent that their effectiveness will diminish.

Respondents from schools still implementing their CSR models were asked how the models have changed since CSR funding ended. The majority reported that, except for funding sources, the intent and purpose of their models have not changed. Most, however, noted several changes, the majority related to staff development, materials and resources, and staff allocations. While most have supplemental funds (combining school, district, and federal Title I funds) to continue implementation, schools typically do not have the same level of financial support as when their models were fully funded. As one respondent pointed out, "Without funding, we can't buy new materials, engage in support, expand or replace the program, or have professional development for the program."

Several respondents noted that staff development was sharply curtailed or no longer available. They reported that new faculty members are not as well trained and not as familiar with the models' details as the teachers who were originally trained. A few of their responses on staff development appear below:

- The assigned external support personnel are no longer available.
- There is limited funding available for training and staff development.
- Hardly anyone can attend the annual conference for professional development.
- As teachers leave our school, it is difficult to provide the same training to [their] replacements.
- Funding is not available for training that was previously [provided] by the program.

With regard to teacher and staff allocations, schools have made several adjustments to accommodate their models after CSR funding ended. One respondent reported that fewer tutors are available; another reported that the program facilitator position has been reduced to half time. Another said that the district has hired an in-house program coordinator. Other respondents commented on these adjustments:

- The team coaching is one area that is missing. Implementation has changed because there is less support.
- District pays the salary of one teacher; our school uses Title I funds to pay for teacher assistant.
- Teachers have changed the amount of time they spend in using the CSRD program.

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Respondents' comments also show that, overall, fewer resources and materials are available to continue implementing CSR models:

- Additional materials and resources have not been purchased due to the lack of funds.
- Books are not being added to the library; we only replace books as they wear out.
- We can no longer provide the enrichment field trips.
- We can no longer buy new equipment or repair what we have.

Some respondents indicated that the "mood" or "attitude" has changed because participants know CSR models are at risk of discontinuing because funding is low or absent. One respondent noted, "The program will have to be discontinued primarily due to major cuts in state funding." Another said, "We are desperately seeking extra funds to keep the program going. . ." Some expressed concern that the current level of funding does not allow for adequate implementation. According to one, the district has "picked up the funding, which is less than originally funded. This has restricted the effectiveness of the program. . ." A few respondents also observed that teachers have become less motivated to be part of the program.

Schools that chose not to continue implementing the CSR model were asked what would have prevented model discontinuation. The consensus was that additional funding would have allowed some of the models to continue. Although funding was the primary issue, respondents also identified others. A few respondents cited the lack of effective or consistent implementation and/or lack of support from the model provider.

Although funding was the most often provided reason, other factors also contributed to program discontinuation. Many schools that continued the program incurred significant expenses (although reduced from the first year of implementation) after funding ended. Site visit findings and survey comments indicate a belief that if the CSR program was strong and successful, so was the motivation to continue to fund the program after CSR funding ended. School that continued the program indicated several funding sources were used to continue the program including Title I funds, grants and local funds. In general, school staff suggested that if the program was strong, funding would be available. There were, however, some schools that implemented models that are expensive and that do not necessarily have a reduced cost over time. This expense is related to the lack of transfer of knowledge from the model provided to the local school. Over time, it is presumed that a CSR program will build local school capacity that would result in a reduction of direct support from the model provider.

**Implementation Level-Institutionalization**

Both surveys examined the extent to which the three stages of school improvement had been attained. As shown in Table 11, 100 percent of respondents to Survey Yes reported attaining "Initiation" and "Implementation," and 76 percent reported reaching the "Institutionalization" phase. This 76 percent is a close match to the 70 percent of models that remain in place. In other words, once the model becomes "institutionalized," it will be continued, assuming that funding is available. An examination of shaded cells on the right side of Table 11 reveals an apparent "diagonal," indicating that it takes time to obtain the final "Institutionalization" stage. Only 2

percent of schools reached that stage during their first year. In fact, nearly 40 percent of schools required four years to attain institutionalization for their CSR model. (The number of respondents to this question varied between 55 and 67 out of a total of 79 Survey Yes respondents.)

**Table 11. School Improvement: Level Attained (Survey Yes)**

| Stages of School Improvement | Stage completed? (%) | | In what year was stage completed? 9%) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Initiation/Mobilization | 100 | | 45 | 37 | 15 | 3 | 0 |
| Implementation | 100 | | 16 | 33 | 28 | 18 | 5 |
| Institutionalization | 76 | 24 | 2 | 15 | 22 | 38 | 24 |

Table 12 presents levels of attainment for schools that are no longer implementing the CSR model (Survey No). Twenty of the 25 respondents to Survey No answered this question. In some cases, these respondents indicated that their schools reached the "Implementation" and "Institutionalization" phases sooner than schools whose CSR models are still in place.

**Table 12. School Improvement: Level Attained (Survey No)**

| Stages of School Improvement | Stage completed? (%) | | In what year was stage completed? (%) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Initiation/Mobilization | 100 | 0 | 43 | 36 | 7 | 14 | 0 |
| Implementation | 95 | 5 | 7 | 64 | 7 | 21 | 0 |
| Institutionalization | 47 | 53 | 0 | 0 | 72 | 29 | 0 |

**Chapter Highlights**

- 79 schools returned surveys indicating that models formerly funded by CSR are still being implemented
- 27 schools returned surveys indicating that models are no longer used (Survey No). Survey No results should be interpreted with caution because only 27 such surveys were returned.
- The majority of schools that are still implementing models are continuing to use the models as originally implemented. A quarter of schools reported that about half of the model is still in place. Some have made significant modifications and have continued to implement only certain aspects of the original model.
- The most important reason for continuation reported by survey respondents relates to successful student outcomes. The second most important reason is the CSR program's alignment with school goals.

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- The comprehensive nature of many reform models requires that a school implementing it must make a large investment. Some schools visited were completely restructured. Changes included curriculum restructuring, staff development and teacher allocations, scheduling, and establishing program libraries. In several cases, the CSR-funded model had been used to develop the school's performance goals.

- Several schools have not yet achieved the level of improved student performance that they had expected. Study findings suggest that student performance on state-level exams does not necessarily reflect a model's success. The majority of interviewees felt that use of the model selected for their schools would eventually increase student performance. Interviewees wanted to give the program a "five-year test," allowing the original group (e.g., first grade students) to go all the way (e.g., through grade 5), being taught via the model.

- Program continuation is directly related to administrative and school staff support.

- For some schools, efforts toward school restructuring have resulted in better schools. Reform efforts produced more accountability, improved teaching strategies, improved teacher coordination and communication, and an overall improved and cohesive school curriculum and instructional approach.

- Some schools reported that these programs were so ingrained in the school structure, system, and culture that it would be impossible to "revert back" to a program that did not include the reform model. In these instances, district funds, along with other local and federal funding sources, continue to support the models.

- Site visit findings and survey comments indicate a belief that if the CSR program was strong and successful, so was the motivation to continue to fund the program after CSR funding ended.

- On average, funding sources for schools continuing the program include local funds (48 percent), federal funds (i.e., Title I, 38 percent), and other funds (i.e., grants, 10 percent).

- The top four reasons for program discontinuations are: did not obtain local (or other) funding, too expensive to continue, did not have support of teachers or administrators, and chose another program.

- Although school staff agreed that the models are expensive to maintain, they also indicated that the expenses associated with the models have decreased since the first years of implementation.

- Findings indicate that school staff are questioning how they will be able to sustain the model over time. All have begun to "cut corners" to ensure that the model can continue. Slightly increasing student-teacher ratios, sharply decreasing staff development, and purchasing fewer instructional materials are the top three areas that principals and

coordinators reported modifying. Some staff members fear that models will be changed to such an extent that their effectiveness will diminish.

- One hundred percent of respondents to Survey Yes reported attaining "Initiation" and "Implementation," and 76 percent reported reaching the "Institutionalization" phase. This 76 percent is a close match to the 70 percent of models that remain in place. This finding suggests that once the model becomes "institutionalized," it will be continued, assuming that funding is available.

## 3.
## CSR Model Components

In addition to assessing the overall implementation status of models funded by CSR grants, this study also surveyed participants regarding the components that form the foundation of their CSR programs. Originally, grantees were encouraged to base model implementation on nine CSR components. Since No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the new CSR program added two more components. Thus, schools that apply for CSR program funding must now address and align their reform programs with 11 components. A CSR program:

- employs proven methods and strategies based on scientific research.
- integrates a comprehensive design with aligned components.
- provides ongoing, high quality professional development for teachers and staff.
- includes measurable goals and benchmarks for student achievement.
- is supported within the school by teachers, administrators, and staff.
- provides support for teachers, administrators, and staff.
- allows for meaningful parent and community involvement in planning, implementing, and evaluating school improvement activities.
- uses high quality technical support and assistance from an external partner with experience and expertise in schoolwide reform and improvement.
- plans for the annual evaluation of strategies for school reform implementation and for student results achieved.
- identifies resources to support and sustain the school's comprehensive reform effort.
- has been found to significantly improve, or demonstrates strong evidence that it will improve, the academic achievement of students.

Survey respondents and site visit interviewees were asked how their schools' CSR model implementations incorporated the initial nine components included in the original CSR program. Table 13 shows the results from the survey of schools with models that continued after program funding ended.

**Table 13. CSR Components of Models Being Implemented (Survey Yes)**

| CSR Components | To what extent did this CSR program implement the following components? | | | Is this component still in place as it was originally implemented? | | Was this component effective in producing the desired results? | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fully Implemented (%) | Somewhat Implemented (%) | Never Implemented (%) | Yes (%) | No (%) | Yes (%) | No (%) | Don't Know |
| Use effective, research-based methods | 89 | 11 | 0 | 87 | 13 | 95 | 5 | 0 |
| Use a comprehensive design with aligned components | 85 | 13 | 1 | 92 | 8 | 96 | 4 | 7 |
| Provide professional development | 84 | 16 | 0 | 72 | 28 | 89 | 11 | 2 |
| Develop measurable goals and benchmarks | 83 | 16 | 1 | 87 | 13 | 91 | 9 | 2 |
| Have support within the school | 78 | 22 | 0 | 83 | 17 | 91 | 9 | 0 |
| Have parental and community involvement | 55 | 40 | 5 | 71 | 29 | 76 | 24 | 5 |
| Use external technical support and assistance | 68 | 28 | 5 | 68 | 32 | 82 | 18 | 2 |
| Have evaluation strategies | 81 | 19 | 0 | 83 | 17 | 93 | 7 | 2 |
| Coordination of resources | 78 | 21 | 1 | 80 | 20 | 92 | 8 | 3 |

Note: *Don't Know responses are not included in Yes/No category percentages.*

The data in Table 13 show that a large percentage of schools that fully implemented the CSR components as part of their models continued to implement the components after funding ended. An exception is the professional development component, which, not unexpectedly, was less strongly implemented after the three-year funding period ended. Staff members interviewed during site visits indicated that as models were implemented from one year to the next, fewer teachers needed training. New teachers still needed to be fully trained, whereas continuing teachers only needed to be kept informed of new methods and model updates. Still, given the turnover rate and percentage of teachers leaving the profession each year, continued staff development is important to a model's effectiveness. (In Texas, for example, the annual turnover rate for teachers is about

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16 percent, according to the 2002 Academic Excellence Indicator System; and, according to the Texas State Board for Educator Certification, almost half of all new teachers leave the profession before the end of their fifth year.)

Findings from site visit interviews regarding professional development were consistent with survey findings. Interviewees said that professional development is one component for which activity has decreased since CSR funding ended. Because of diminished funds, most models that are still in place use previously trained teachers to train new teachers. Interviewees indicated that funds for conferences and workshops are no longer available and noted that it is difficult to stay informed and updated.

When asked whether the CSRD components were effective, a large percentage of survey respondents indicated that most components were producing the desired results. Although the components "Have parental and community involvement" and "Use external technical support and assistance" were rated lower than other components in terms of results, more than 75 percent of respondents said that these components had achieved expected results.

Table 14 presents information regarding CSR program components for schools that chose to discontinue implementing their models after program funding ended (Survey No). A comparison of data in Tables 13 and 14 indicate that a larger percentage of schools not continuing their models also reported not fully implementing several components. While more than 70 percent of schools continuing their model reported that they fully implemented the majority of the components, approximately 50 percent of schools that discontinued their models also reported that they fully implemented most of the model components. In other words, Survey Yes respondents were more likely than Survey No respondents to report that all CSR components were fully implemented.

**Table 14. CSR Components of Models No Longer in Place (Survey No)**

| CSRD Components | To what extent did this CSRD program implement the following components? | | | Was this component effective in producing the desired results? | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fully Imple-mented (%) | Somewhat Imple-mented (%) | Never Imple-mented (%) | Yes (%) | No (%) | Don't Know |
| Use effective, research-based methods | 58 | 38 | 4 | 90 | 10 | 1 |
| Use a comprehensive design with aligned components | 57 | 39 | 4 | 75 | 25 | 0 |
| Provide professional development | 63 | 33 | 4 | 75 | 25 | 1 |
| Develop measurable goals and benchmarks | 57 | 39 | 4 | 86 | 14 | 0 |
| Have support within the school | 54 | 42 | 4 | 70 | 30 | 1 |
| Have parental and community involvement | 35 | 57 | 9 | 62 | 38 | 0 |
| Use external technical support and assistance | 57 | 39 | 4 | 79 | 21 | 1 |
| Have evaluation strategies | 58 | 33 | 8 | 71 | 29 | 0 |
| Coordinate resources | 42 | 50 | 8 | 65 | 35 | 1 |

Note: *"Don't Know" responses are not included in Yes/No category percentages.*

The largest difference between responses to the Yes and No surveys was under "Coordination of resources." The next largest differences were found for "Use of effective, research-based methods" and for "Use a comprehensive design with aligned components." All three of these components relate to efficiency at least as much as they relate to effectiveness. These data seem to reinforce the idea that planning for the implementation of a model and careful selection of the approach are critical to its success.

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**Site Visit Findings on Model Components**

During site visit interviews, program coordinators and teachers did not think of their schools' models in terms of the nine CSR components. Although some recalled hearing about the components in a workshop, they did not specifically remember implementation of their school's model as having been based on these components. Still, it appears that overall, the CSR model components were addressed and implemented. Several examples of how components were addressed follow.

*Use Effective, Research-Based Methods*

Although the selection process varied from school to school, most selected a model that had previously been identified as research-based. (Models selected by the large majority of schools surveyed are included in several publications that characterize these models' methods as research-based.)

Several schools formed selection committees of teachers and administrators who did their own research by visiting other schools—typically, those with demographic profiles similar to their own students—to observe the models being used. These visits helped them identify the models most appropriate for their schools. In addition, state departments of education, SEDL, district staff members, and model providers offered workshops and presentations for schools selecting appropriate models.

Some schools modified their selected model—despite the model's basis in effective, research-based methods—to better serve their local student population. In such instances, interviewees noted that the research was not necessarily conducted at a site where conditions matched the needs and circumstances of their school's students.

*Use a Comprehensive Design with Aligned Components*

The majority of schools visited by the AIM research team had implemented models that used a comprehensive design with aligned components. Models such as Success for All, Advancement via Student Determination (AVID), and Design for Literacy include specific lessons that align with particular instructional and performance goals. CSR models that have remained in place after the grant's end are fully aligned with the school/district goals. In some schools, the CSR model goals themselves were adopted as the school's improvement goals. Discontinued models' goals were not integrated or aligned with overall improvement plans for the school or district. Some models—Problem-Based Learning (PBL), for example—do not align well with state standardized assessment systems. PBL is better suited to assessment that is portfolio-based.

Several examples from the site visits demonstrate how CSR models align with state, local, and federal goals. In Arkansas, for example, all schools are expected to implement the statewide Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas (ELLA) in grade 1 and the Arkansas Effective Literacy writing program in grades 2 and 3. In one school that implemented Success for All (SFA), teachers can use SFA and ELLA simultaneously because both are guided by the same principles. Older students use a state-mandated multicultural reading, thinking, and writing program instead of SFA writing. SFA consultants allow teachers to make these adjustments, and they have recognized the shift toward the state's accountability system by offering accountability related sessions at their conferences. In addition, their focus has changed from strictly implementing the

model to achieving measurable student performance. This school has also created documents aligning SFA with district benchmarks and with the SAT 9 testing program.

In another Arkansas school, interviewees noted that the Reading Recovery model they implemented with CSR funds is closely aligned with ELLA. Teachers are pleased with the ELLA/Reading Recovery combination. One said, "It's a lot of hard work, but we're seeing results. It's sequenced in a way that we know what we're doing and we know what we're looking for."

Oklahoma requires every child read at grade level by third grade. The coordinators at one school said that SFA has contributed significantly toward reaching this goal because the model requires that assessments be conducted every eight weeks. The SFA assessments, along with the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), allow teachers to monitor progress and to make adjustments to achieve the state goal for all third grade students.

In Texas, several models align well with both state and federal goals. AVID and Creating Independence through Student-owned Strategies (CRISS), for instance, are consistent with district and state goals in that they are designed to lower student dropout rates, increase the umber of students taking AP classes and SAT/ACT college entrance exams, increase the number of students attending college, and increase the number of students graduating under the state's recommended or distinguished plan.

The study also examined CSR models that did not align with local or state performance goals. After implementing Co-Nect and PBL, one Texas school chose to discontinue both models partly because staff members felt that their use did not support state and/or local goals. The program coordinator noted that the scope and sequence of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum is, and that teachers did not feel comfortable using student-centered PBL strategies in light of TEKS.

Another reason this school discontinued its CSR models was that the incoming superintendent had developed new goals for all schools in the district. These goals were viewed as directly impacting teaching strategies. Another complicating factor was that the school was in the process of being restructured from a grades 6–8 campus to a K–8 campus. Under these conditions, teachers did not feel that administrative support would be sufficient for them to continue PBL.

*Provide Ongoing, High Quality Professional Development*

At all schools visited, interviewees reported that staff development—particularly during the first few years of implementation—was critical to the success of CSR models. All schools included the staff development component as part of the implementation process for their CSR models. During the first three years, while CSR funds were available, teachers attended to conferences and workshops. Several model providers organized in-school training sessions and provided contact persons, who visited schools on a regular basis.

Despite the importance of the staff development component, principals recently noted that this training has been significantly impacted by the lack of funding. Previously, schools were able to send teachers and coordinators to annual conferences, but the majority of principals and

coordinators said that funds for attending annual conferences presented by model providers were no longer available. By the time interviews were conducted, schools had begun to use previously trained teachers to train new teachers, and experienced teachers were meeting regularly with other teachers for discussions on the model. In one school, for example, staff members met once a week to discuss specific issues regarding the model or to hear presentations from colleagues in their school or from other school districts.

*Develop Measurable Goals and Benchmarks*
All CSR models involved in this study have measurable goals and benchmarks that are incorporated with school and state assessment systems. Several models include periodic student assessment with specific benchmarks for improvement. For example, models such as Design for Literacy, Success for All, and Reading Recovery include built-in assessments that measure student progress. AVID includes specific goals that measure student participation and success.

A school district's goals change over time. Often, shifts in goals are driven by demands of federal, state, and, in some cases, local mandates. Many interviewees noted that the outcomes they originally considered as important have shifted to reflect goals associated with No Child Left Behind or their state's accountability systems. School personnel are learning to develop goals and measurable outcomes that simultaneously take into account local, specific school needs and state and national accountability requirements. For example, if certain aspects of grade 4 mathematics have been weak for the past several years, it is appropriate to target needs related to grade 4 mathematics instruction, with the understanding that overall mathematics performance will still be measured in terms of accountability. Thus, a model with a very narrow focus may achieve performance increases that are so limited that the model, although successful, ultimately fails the school because it may not be compatible with district, state, or national goals.

*Have Support within the School*
Site visits confirmed that models were best implemented with school and district support. Without district support, the use of CSR models was usually discontinued.

Several principals said that it was difficult to obtain staff support at the beginning of the CSR program. Involving staff members in selecting the CSR model helped ensure their support. With several models, teachers indicated that they felt intimidated at the beginning of model implementation. In Success for All and Design for Learning, for example, teachers must use instructional strategies that they may never have used before. Older, more experienced teachers felt threatened, and many resisted the change. One principal said, "All teachers were put to the test, and some left our school." With time, however, and after observing the results of improved student performance, teachers began to support the use of many of these models. One said, "The program sells itself." During site visits, all teachers interviewed were supportive of their school's reform model and thought of themselves as better teachers because of the CSR program.

Successful models also require support from teachers and other staff members who are not directly involved in the models' implementations. In one AVID program in Texas, as part of a task that teaches organizational skill, students are required to maintain a notebook for each class using specific guidelines. Students in the AVID program routinely visit colleges, universities, and work sites to learn about different professions. The AVID coordinator in this school said that

the model works best when all teachers in the school are aware of its goals and when they support the model by providing flexible arrangements for AVID students to make up classes and tests.

*Have Parental and Community Involvement*
Responses regarding the parental involvement component varied across site visits. Most interviewees noted that although parental support exists for their school's model, increasing parental involvement is still challenging. While parents appear to support CSR models, this support does not necessarily translate into increased involvement. Still, some interviewees indicated that as a result of CSR program implementation, the school has enjoyed an increase in parental support and involvement. One New Mexico school principal said the program had increased the number of parents requesting transfers for their children to attend his school.

Site visits revealed that comprehensive programs do not go unnoticed by parents. Elementary schoolwide programs such as Success for All and Design for Literacy involve schedule changes and other investments that modify the instructional methods and, in some cases, the school culture as it pertains to student learning. These changes appear to be regarded positively by parents.

Interviewees indicated that model providers do not always assist school staff members or provide training that involves strategies for increasing parental and community support.

*Use External Technical Support and Assistance*
Interviewees reported that one of the most important components regarding CSR model implementation is the use of external technical support and assistance. Similarly, survey respondents were generally pleased with the level of support that they received from the model providers and said that proper training, particularly in the first two years of implementation, was critical to the model's success. Tables 15 and 16 contain information about the quality of the models and their providers. There is a marked difference between responses for the two types of surveys, Yes and No. Fewer respondents to Survey No—those whose schools are no longer implementing the CSR model—said that the quality of the model and support were excellent than respondents to Survey Yes. Although lack of funding was listed as a primary reason for not continuing the model, other issues related to the quality of the approach and the support provided also contributed to model discontinuation.

**Table 15. Model Quality: Program Still in Place (Survey Yes)**

| Model and Provider | Poor (%) | Fair (%) | Good (%) | Excellent (%) | Total N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Please rate quality of model used for the CSR program. | 0 | 3 | 30 | 68 | 80 |
| Please rate quality of support received from the model provider. | 1 | 1 | 33 | 65 | 80 |

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**Table 16. Model Quality: Programs No Longer in Place (Survey No)**

| Model and Provider | Poor (%) | Fair (%) | Good (%) | Excellent (%) | Total N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Please rate quality of model used for the CSR program. | 0 | 25 | 50 | 25 | 24 |
| Please rate quality of support received from the model provider. | 9 | 22 | 44 | 26 | 23 |

Many interviewees indicated that model support was very good, both in schools that continued the program and in schools that did not continue. In some cases, consultants provided informal help even after the CSR funding had ended. On the other hand, support from one provider (out of all the models implemented) was characterized as less than adequate and sometimes confusing.

As was true for professional development, some model support, over time, has shifted from the model provider to the school. In some successful models, external support (for example, training of a master teacher by the model provider) was replaced by internal support (through use of the trainer of trainer model, for example), for which teachers whose training was paid for by CSR funds now serve as resources for other teachers. Such evidence of institutionalization correlated with good outcomes.

*Have Evaluation Strategies*

Strategies for evaluating CSR programs before funding ended were primarily based on evaluation requirements stipulated in the CSR grant. Evaluation strategies varied by state and school. They typically involved an analysis of state-administered assessments, along with overall school staff and parent perceptions regarding the models. Most evaluation strategies were informal. Although educators have a broad range of ideas regarding methods and outcomes to assess the effectiveness of these models, few have conducted longitudinal, comprehensive evaluations of their schools' models. More detailed information regarding evaluation strategies and student performance is presented in the chapter entitled "Measures of Performance."

*Coordinate Resources*

Coordination of resources is an important component, especially now that schools no longer receive CSR funding. All have supplemented their models' ongoing operating costs with local, state, and federal funds. Some schools have also applied for and received additional federal grants, and a few have received grants from private organizations.

**Academic Achievement of Students**

To be considered successful, CSR programs must improve student achievement. While some schools' programs have not yet achieved such results, respondents from all of the schools that chose to continue their CSR models after funding ended indicated that they believe the models will produce improved student achievement. Many school administrators said that they did not consider the first three years of implementation to be long enough for changes in student performance to become evident. School staff members said that several components must first be in place: staff training, staff acceptance of the model, parental support, alignment of the model's goals with school and district goals, and a working relationship with the model provider. In some schools, effectively implementing all these components may take one to four years.

Some educators believe that improved student performance will become apparent after students have been instructed according to the CSR model for a number of consecutive years. In some schools, students who are currently in grade 4 or 5 have had such instruction since grade 1 or 2. In these instances, after three years of coordinated and cohesive instruction, school staff members believe student performance will improve to an extent that it can be measured. In high schools, when implementing a model such as AVID, it takes four years to graduate a class of students who began participating in AVID as freshmen. In one school, where 2003 was the first graduating class for AVID participants, several successful outcomes were highlighted during interviews.

Although performance gains may not be evident until late in a model's implementation, interviewees, in many cases, felt strongly committed to continuing their school's model, perhaps because they believed the model was benefiting students despite the dearth of evidence. Table 8 indicates that successful student outcomes are the most important reason that some CSR programs continued. Despite the importance of successful student performance, some CSR programs may be difficult to discontinue after investing so much effort into implementing the models, even without immediate evidence of improved performance. It is recommended that a carefully considered exit plan be part of adopting any reform model.

**Chapter Highlights**

- The majority of schools that fully implemented the CSR components as part of their models continued to implement the components after funding ended.

- The professional development component was less strongly implemented after the three-year funding period ended. As models were implemented from one year to the next, fewer teachers needed training. New teachers still needed to be fully trained, whereas continuing teachers only needed to be kept informed of new methods and model updates.

- A larger percentage of schools not continuing their models also reported not fully implementing several CSR components. While more than 70 percent of schools continuing their model reported that they fully implemented the majority of the components, approximately 50 percent of schools that discontinued their models also reported that they fully implemented most of the model components.

- Program coordinators and teachers did not think of their schools' models in terms of the CSR components. Although some recalled hearing about the components in a workshop, they did not specifically remember implementation of their school's model as having been based on these components.

- The majority of schools selected a model that had previously been identified as research-based. Some schools modified their selected model—despite the model's basis in effective, research-based methods—to better serve their local student population.

- The majority of schools implemented models that used a comprehensive design with aligned components.

- Staff development_particularly during the first few years of implementation_was critical to the success of CSR models. All schools included the staff development component as part of the implementation process for their CSR models.

- All CSR models involved in this study have measurable goals and benchmarks that are incorporated with school and state assessment systems. Several models include periodic student assessment with specific benchmarks for improvement.

- Models were best implemented with school and district staff support. Without district support, the use of CSR models was usually discontinued.

- Although parental support exists for their school's model, increasing parental involvement is still challenging. While parents appear to support CSR models, this support does not necessarily translate into increased involvement.

- The use of external technical support and assistance was reported as an important components regarding CSR model implementation is. Survey respondents were generally pleased with the level of support that they received from the model providers and said that proper training, particularly in the first two years of implementation, was critical to the model's success.

- While some schools' programs have not yet achieved such results, respondents from all of the schools that chose to continue their CSR models after funding ended indicated that they believe the models will produce improved student achievement.

# 4.
# Measures of Performance

Although the success of a restructuring program or reform model can be measured in a variety of ways—enhanced professional development, increased and improved instructional resources, and reduction in staff turnover, to name a few—most success measures involve the student. Typical student outcomes include increased self-esteem, greater classroom participation, and, of course, higher test scores. Several different measure were examined; however, the term "success" is dependent on what is trying to be accomplished by each program. This is "internal" success. Externally defined success, like graduation rates, may overlap with the internal measures; these are often defined by the state. In some cases, the external definition of success may be in conflict with the internal goals of the program.

Programs take a certain amount of time to be effective, regardless of the measurements employed. This means attempting to assign an outcome measure (e.g., increased student performance on tests) to a particular program is complicated by the length of time the program has been in place. In the case of CSR-funded models, an additional factor is that the original funding source is no longer in place. The models under review received funding only for three years from CSR. Some models are no longer being implemented at all, some are still being used in a limited way, and others continue to operate as they did when CSR funding was available. Thus when reviewing the outcomes examined in this chapter, the reader should consider the degree of implementation and the variety of models used.

Three data sources were used to examine the performance of CSR-funded models. The first source relies on self-reported information gathered from a survey of schools that implemented CSR models in the five states included in this study: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The second source also relies on self-reported data derived from site visits to a sample of schools that received CSR grants in the five states. Published, objective data constitute the third source. To ensure their accuracy, emphasis is placed on published data. Because published data such as statewide criterion-referenced tests are uniform within states, longitudinal comparisons among schools are possible when such data are available. However, comparisons across states are not possible, given the variety of tests, grade levels, standards, and definitions that are used.

**Outcome Measures**

As previously noted, CSR programs are not limited to a particular model; nor is any one goal common to all models. Allowing emphasis to be placed where appropriate leads to a diversity of approaches and models. While this contributes to the strength of a general program such as CSR, it also complicates the issue of measuring student performance.

A critical precursor for any effort to increase student performance is to have measurable goals and objectives so that progress may be ascertained in a concrete, impartial manner. Measurable goals and objectives are key components associated with the CSR program. In schools where the model funded by CSR continues to be implemented, 83 percent of survey respondents indicated

that they have developed measurable goals and benchmarks. On the other hand, in schools where the model has not continued, only 67 percent reported that they had developed such goals.

Nearly all (98 percent) of respondents in schools where the CSR model is still in place noted a positive impact on student achievement. Even in sites where the model is no longer used, 88 percent reported a positive impact. Moreover, respondents identified a correlation between the quality of the model and whether the program was still being implemented in 2003. The quality of the model is linked, as discussed in Chapter 3, to the level of student success (although factors other than the quality of the model also have an impact).

Respondents ranked, in order of importance, outcome measures they consider most appropriate to gauge the impact of the CSR program. These opinions identify the outcomes that respondents believe were addressed by the CSR model they selected to implement in their schools. The extent that the outcome list differs, or in non-compatible with state and federal accountability standard is directly related to the difficulty in continuing the model. Table 17 shows that the second, third, and fourth outcomes listed (student engagement, grades, and portfolio) are not commonly included in state or federal accountability standards. Tables 17 and 18 contain this information for schools with both continuing and discontinued models. The ratings are collapsed into three broad categories: number of 1 and 2 rankings (most important); number of 3, 4, and 5 rankings; and number of 6 and 7 rankings (least important).

In Table 17, student test scores were ranked as most important (i.e., ranked first or second) 63 percent of the time and as least important (i.e., ranked sixth or seventh) 13 percent of the time. Although some differences exist between the information in Tables 17 and 18, it is noteworthy that the first three outcomes in ranked importance are identical whether or not a model is still in use. The last two outcomes are also identical; thus, only student portfolio and attendance were ranked differently by respondents from schools with continuing and discontinued models.

**Table 17. Importance of Outcome Measures: Model Still in Place**

| Outcome | Importance Rank 1 and 2 (%) | Importance Rank 3, 4, and 5 (%) | Importance Rank 6 and 7 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Student test scores | 63 | 24 | 13 |
| Student engagement | 55 | 38 | 7 |
| Student grades | 29 | 58 | 13 |
| Student portfolio | 19 | 36 | 44 |
| Student attendance | 14 | 50 | 36 |
| School completion | 13 | 26 | 49 |
| Parental involvement | 12 | 45 | 43 |

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**Table 18. Importance of Outcome Measures: Model No Longer in Place**

| Outcome | Importance Rank 1 and 2 (%) | Importance Rank 3, 4, and 5 (%) | Importance Rank 6 and 7 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Student test scores | 73 | 18 | 9 |
| Student engagement | 47 | 37 | 16 |
| Student grades | 40 | 50 | 10 |
| Student attendance | 18 | 29 | 53 |
| Student portfolio | 16 | 37 | 47 |
| School completion | 11 | 39 | 50 |
| Parental involvement | 11 | 47 | 42 |

As explained elsewhere in this report, the apparent emphasis on parental involvement in programs—and, correspondingly, the impact of models on increasing parental involvement—seemed to be quite low. On the other hand, the school completion outcome, although ranked low in importance overall by respondents in both groups, was of the greatest importance in schools serving students who are at very high risk of dropping out, or who have been "recovered" from dropping out and hope to complete high school.

Survey respondents were asked to provide additional outcome measures that could be used to measure the success of the CSR programs. Several alternative measures were indicated:

- School discipline—number of student referrals/office referrals; reduction of discipline referrals during reading
- Teacher/staff/community involvement
- Post-secondary education enrollment; number of students staying in college
- Survey results for student and parent attitudes toward reading
- Number of students taking AP, pre-AP, and advanced classes
- Number of students obtaining scholarships
- School environment/climate and classroom management
- Teacher retention
- Number of students in honor society
- Number of students involved in school activities and community service
- Review of school organization; level of model's involvement in campus improvement plans
- Increased student input/verbal communication
- Decreased "teacher talk" time in classrooms
- Sustainability of model

**Site Visit Findings Regarding Outcomes**

In some cases, obtaining data during site visits was difficult. CSR funding had ceased two years prior to the visits, and many program directors did not keep data specific to the program. Some CSR-funded models had been implemented schoolwide, whereas for other models, only selected

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students participated. The information reported in this section is based primarily on opinions of interviewees and survey respondents (with exceptions noted).

The mailed survey was structured; it consisted of a set list of outcomes and response options (although respondents could list additional outcomes). By contrast, the results from the site visits are based on much less directed questions. Although the 15 sites visited for the study represent about 5 percent of all schools implementing CSR in the five states, the depth of information gathered on-site exceeded what was possible from the overall survey. In fact, the responses differed from survey responses in interesting ways. Moreover, findings from published data also differed somewhat from survey results and from on-site findings. Still, some general patterns were evident from those three distinct methods of viewing CSR participants and their experiences.

Table 19 contains the number of times a particular outcome was mentioned by respondents in interviews conducted during site visits. For this table, if more than one respondent noted an outcome at a particular site, it was counted only once. Note that these data come from a variety of schools—both continuing and discontinuing implementation of CSR models—and from elementary, middle, and high schools. This finding indicates that schools have observed several benefits from CSR, many of which are not part of formal state or federal accountability systems.

**Table 19. Number and Percentage for Outcomes Rated as Positive and at Least Partially Attributable to CSR**

| Outcome | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Built teamwork (teachers), decreased turnover, increased reputation of school | 11 | 73 |
| Increased student self-esteem, sense of belonging to school, willingness to learn | 7 | 47 |
| Helped the student who was far behind | 6 | 40 |
| Created a better student, lifelong learner, self-directed learner | 7 | 47 |
| Improved graduation rates or lowered dropout rates | 5 | 33 |
| Improved achievement test scores | 5 | 33 |
| Helped below grade-level student, but not at rate required by state/federal standards | 5 | 33 |
| Worked best for special education or gifted students | 2 | 13 |
| Improved student discipline | 1 | 7 |
| Increased parental involvement | 1 | 7 |
| Improved attendance | 1 | 7 |

Note. Total number of sites visited = 15

**Student Performance as Determined from Published Data**

For two reasons, this section primarily presents data from Texas schools. First, Texas had the greatest number of CSR program sites (more than twice as many as Louisiana, the state with the next greatest number). In addition, Texas has compiled many years of comparable data pertaining to a variety of outcomes at the school level. Selected school-level data from Arkansas are also considered for this survey, but somewhat less information is available for that state than

for Texas. Because few schools in New Mexico and Oklahoma were included in this study, no formal comparisons are considered, as their data are likely to be quite unstable. It should be noted that, in the remaining states, patterns similar to those discussed below for Texas and Arkansas have been identified through informal comparisons of districts that implemented CSR programs with the overall state.

*Texas*

For at least the past 16 years, Texas has administered some form of statewide criterion-referenced test. Data from test scores, along with annual dropout rates, are the primary outcomes used to rate campuses and districts under the state's accountability system. Schools that are rated low performing for more than one year are liable for sanctions, including closure of the school. The state-mandated test has a strong measurement focus on the state's instructional elements (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills or TEKS). Data for the comparisons in this chapter are based on the version of this test (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills or TAAS) that was given through Spring 2002 in grades 3–8, with an exit examination at grade 10. TAAS was replaced by the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Because the data from TAKS are not strictly comparable to TAAS data, they are not considered in this study.

As shown in Table 20, performance levels for Texas students on all TAAS subtests have increased since 1998. This measure (all tests taken) is a composite of reading and mathematics scores at all grade levels (3–8 plus exit); writing at grades 4, 8, and exit; and science and social studies at grade 8. The data in this table are a composite including all grade levels, and represent scores for students included in the accountability ratings.

**Table 20. TAAS Performance for CSR Schools, All Students Statewide, and Economically Disadvantaged Students Statewide: Percentage Passing All Tests Taken**

| Group | 1998 (%) | 1999 (%) | 2000 (%) | 2001 (%) | 2002 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CSR | 58.9 | 65.2 | 80.3 | 72.8 | 77.7 |
| Econ disadv | 66.4 | 67.5 | 70.0 | 73.6 | 78.2 |
| All students | 77.7 | 78.1 | 79.9 | 82.1 | 85.3 |

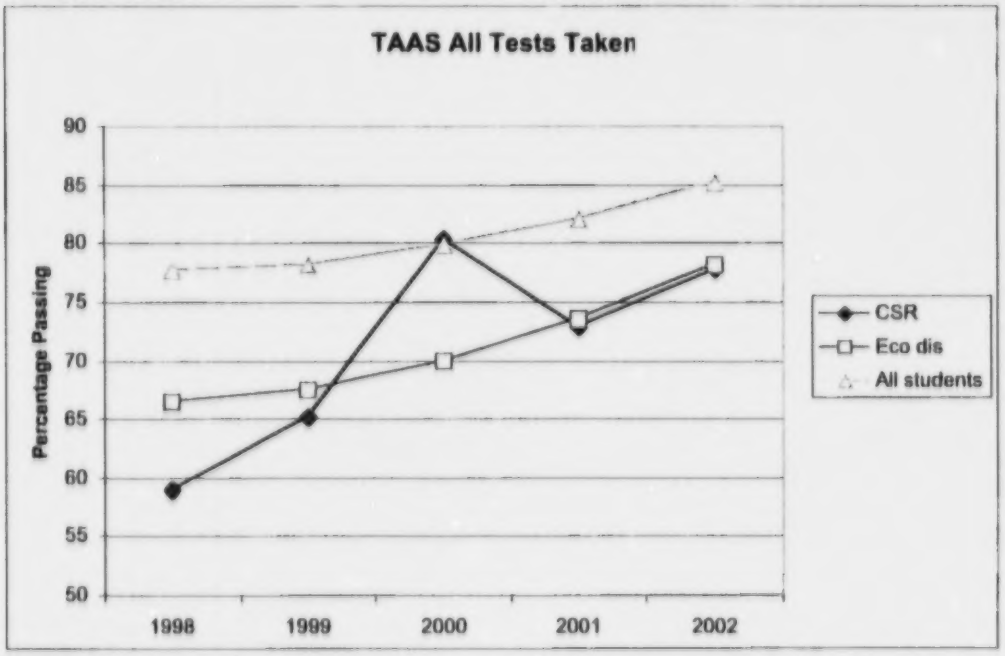
*Source: TEA. AEIS Reports for years 1998–2002*

In Texas, about 28 percent of respondents reported that their schools' CSR-funded models did not continue. (Given that only 23 percent of Texas schools receiving CSR grants returned surveys—about half the return rate for other states in this study—it is conceivable that the percentage of discontinued CSR models in Texas schools is greater than 28 percent.) One might expect that when CSR funding ended in 2000, an immediate impact on the performance of students in the schools that had received grants would be apparent. However, just as it is not reasonable to expect an immediate upswing in test performance in the first year of a program, it is also unreasonable to expect a strong downturn after its final year. It would be impossible to reconstruct enough history to substantiate a claim of performance detriments after funding ended, although certain results are intriguing.

The data in Table 20 and in Graph 1 are based on all 137 of the CSR schools, not just those responding to the survey. Students in CSR schools made significant performance gains from 1998 to 1999; however, by 2001, those schools' performance had dropped to approximately the

same level as economically disadvantaged students in the state overall. (In Texas, students in CSR schools were approximately 74 percent economically disadvantaged, versus about 50 percent economically disadvantaged students in all schools statewide.) Graph 1 shows this trend more clearly and tracks both the state performance overall and performance for all economically disadvantaged students. It shows that student performance in schools with CSR funding declined in 2001.

**Graph 1. TAAS Performance, All Tests Taken: CSR Schools, Economically Disadvantaged, and All Students in Texas**




The Algebra I end-of-course examination is given whenever a student takes Algebra I. This can occur at any grade level from 7 to 12. Not surprisingly, high achieving students take Algebra I in middle school. Of the CSR schools in Texas where Algebra I may have been offered, 68 percent are middle schools. Results from the Algebra I end-of-course examination are not considered in the state's accountability ratings; however, districts had the option to count the results in determining their students' final grades.

Table 21 presents information by year for CSR school students onomically disadvantaged students, and all students at the state level. These data reflect test information for approximately 70 schools (because only 18 schools reported Algebra I data in 1998, that year is not included in Table 25). As might be expected, the data from the CSR schools (with a high percentage of middle schools) indicate a much higher passing percentage than the state overall or for economically disadvantaged students. (Data are not reported separately for middle and high schools for the state for Algebra I end-of-course examinations.)



AR

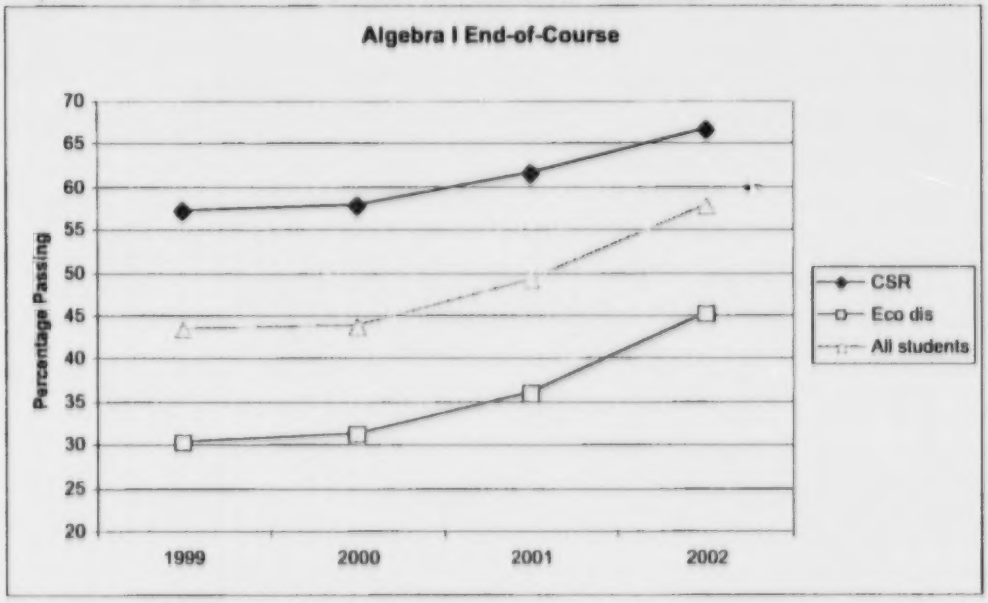
**Table 21. Texas Algebra I End-of-Course Examination: Percentage Passing**

| | 1999 (%) | 2000 (%) | 2001 (%) | 2002 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CSR | 57.3 | 57.7 | 61.5 | 66.7 |
| Econ disadv | 30.2 | 31.3 | 36.0 | 45.1 |
| All students | 43.4 | 43.9 | 49.2 | 57.8 |

*Source: TEA AEIS Reports for years 1998–2002*

As may be observed in Graph 2, CSR school students' initial performance on Algebra I end-of-course exams was higher than the state, and it increased at approximately the same rate as the state's overall performance. As the performance levels increase, there is probably a ceiling effect that is responsible for decreasing this difference in performance.

**Graph 2. Texas Algebra I End-of-Course Examination: Percentage Passing**




The information in Table 22 is based on approximately 23 schools — primarily high schools where advanced courses are offered (The Texas Education Agency lists more than 150 advanced courses; for example, Physics II). Data for these few schools are not very stable; still, the CSR schools' student passing rates appear to have increased as compared to rates for economically disadvantaged students statewide. By 2001 (the latest year for which these data are available, as they are "lagged" one year by TEA), CSR performance was actually slightly higher than for all students in the state; however, what is important is not only that percentages are high, but also that students are attempting these courses and passing at high rates in schools with many economically disadvantaged students.

**Table 22. Texas Percentage of Students Passing Advanced Courses**

| | 1997 (%) | 1998 (%) | 1999 (%) | 2000 (%) | 2001 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CSR | 17.0 | 10.3 | 18.4 | 19.3 | 19.6 |
| Econ disadv | 13.2 | 12.6 | 11.3 | 13.8 | 12.8 |
| All students | 19.6 | 18.9 | 17.5 | 20.1 | 19.3 |

*Source: TEA AEIS Reports for years 1998–2002*

Two other measures closely related to school completion were examined: student attendance and dropout rates. At the student level, an early indicator for dropping out of school is decreased attendance. At the school level, attendance rates are highly correlated with grade levels. Elementary schools have high attendance rates, whereas rates for high schools are considerably less. Middle school attendance rates tend to be more similar to elementary schools, but somewhat lower.

Table 23 and Graph 3 contain attendance data for students in all 137 CSR schools, economically disadvantaged students statewide, and the overall state attendance rate. These data, like those for end-of-course exams, are "lagged" by one year. In general, attendance rates are at very reasonable levels. For example, the required attendance rate to meet adequate yearly progress in Texas under the No Child Left Behind Act is only 90 percent for both elementary and middle schools. Table 23 shows a trend of slight increase in attendance rates across the three groups since 1997. The trend in attendance rates across the three groups shown in Table 23 is toward slight increases since 1997.

**Table 23. Texas Attendance Rates**

| | 1997 (%) | 1998 (%) | 1999 (%) | 2000 (%) | 2001 (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CSR | 94.1 | 94.4 | 94.4 | 94.7 | 94.6 |
| Econ disadv | 94.8 | 95.0 | 95.1 | 95.4 | 95.3 |
| All students | 95.2 | 95.3 | 95.4 | 95.6 | 95.5 |

*Source: TEA AEIS Reports for years 1998–2002*

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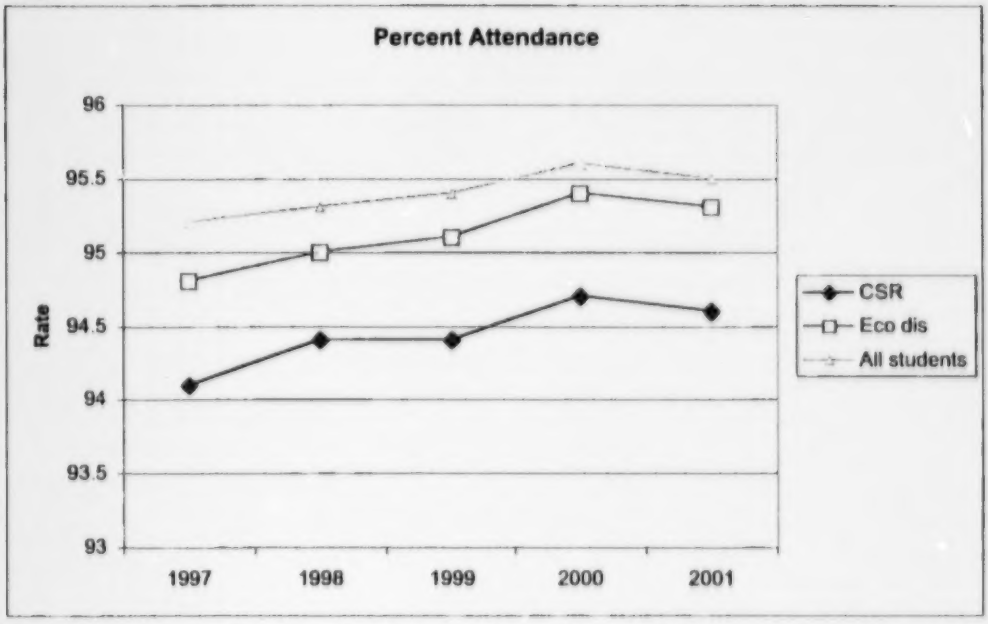
**Graph 3. Texas Attendance Rates**




The other measure related to school completion is the annual dropout rate. In Texas, this measure is used as part of the determination of accountability ratings. (Future calculations may reflect completion rates—graduation, GED, longitudinal dropout—instead of the annual dropout rate.) Table 24 presents annual dropout information. Economically disadvantaged students leave school at higher rates than other students; nonetheless, because more middle schools than high schools (proportionately) are included in the CSR group than in the statewide "all students" group, the lower dropout rate observed for this group is expected. The trend in dropout rates shown in Table 24 and in Graph 4 is downward for all three groups.

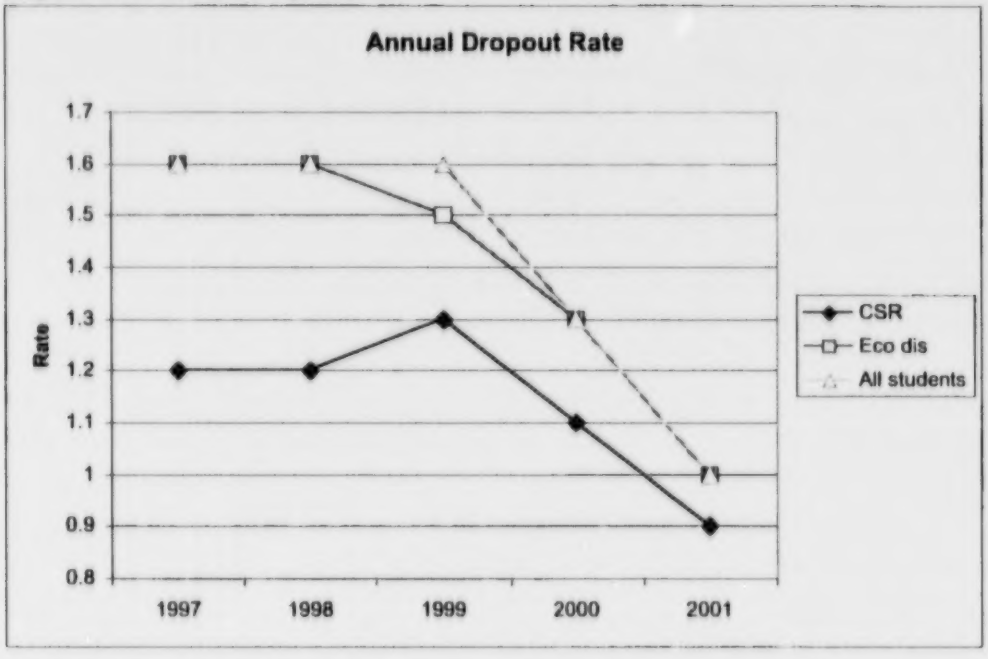
**Table 24. Texas Annual Dropout Rates**

| | 1997 (%) | 1998(%) | 1999(%) | 2000(%) | 2001(%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CSRD | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 0.9 |
| Econ disadv | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.0 |
| All students | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.0 |

*Source: TEA AEIS Reports for years 1998–2002*

The dropout rate for CSR schools is lower than the state average even though the CSR schools have a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students than the state overall. Economically disadvantaged student have a higher dropout rate. On the other hand, because most of the CSR schools with published dropout rates are middle schools, the lower rate is expected.

**Graph 4. Texas Annual Dropout Rates**




*Arkansas*

The volume of data available from Arkansas at the school level, although greater than that from Louisiana, New Mexico, or Oklahoma, was somewhat limited. Moreover, the data collection methods and assessment instruments have undergone changes during the time period of the CSR grant and continuing through 2002. Nonetheless, patterns were found to be very similar to those observed in Texas. Performance for students in CSR schools either track the state (with higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students) or show trend lines that exceed the state.

**Student Performance as Determined from Data Gathered during Site Visits**

The range of educational reform models adopted by schools receiving CSR grants suggests that a variety of needs—and, therefore, a range of outcomes—were important to school staff. Accordingly, desired outcomes and approaches differed among schools implementing the same model, whereas similar outcomes were often within the goals of CSR schools implementing different models. The absence of a common goal or standardized measure limits this study's capacity to generalize about the overall impact of the CSR program. Planning for school reform, to be effective, must be site dependent. Thus the goals and outcomes for Bernalillo Public Schools in New Mexico would not (and should not) be identical to those selected by schools in Little Rock, Arkansas, or Houston, Texas.

To be considered appropriate for evaluating the effectiveness of a particular program or model, the outcome should match the means for assessing it. While it may seem obvious that desired outcomes and assessments should match, with the advent of federal and state requirements, changes have occurred that have forced schools participating in CSR programs to concentrate on

outcomes different from those originally envisioned and adopted. Of the 15 schools visited, two discontinued implementing the model, and five do not implement the model in the same manner as when the CSR-funded model was originally implemented. Most of the changes have occurred because the original CSR program did not match the newly required state or federal accountability requirements.

An additional factor—multiple programs—has complicated the issues of assessment and outcome. For their CSR programs, several schools implemented more than one model (usually two) operating concurrently. It appears that the degree of emphasis on each model has varied from time to time, with one model taking precedence over the other as the importance of outcomes shifted. (One school that appeared to have implemented four programs at once now has none. This is likely a case of taking on too many programs that attempted to address too many different outcomes or different aspects of outcomes.)

**Role of Student Performance in Program Continuation**

According to survey results, the most important aspect of a model that led to its continued use was successful student outcomes. Survey respondents from schools with continuing models selected one or more reasons why their school's model was continued and indicated the reason they considered most important. Table 8 shows that all survey respondents who wrote open-ended responses reported that successful student performance measures were the main reason that their school's CSR-funded model continues to be implemented. One respondent indicated that the model helps the school meet its accountability growth targets.

**Chapter Highlights**

- Nearly all (98 percent) of respondents in schools where the CSR model is still in place noted a positive impact on student achievement. For discontinued programs, 88 percent reported a positive impact.

- School staff have observed several benefits from CSR, many of which are not part of formal state or federal accountability systems: increased teamwork, increased teacher and student morale, increased coordination of teaching, improved teaching strategies, etc.

- In Texas, students in CSR schools made significant performance gains from 1998 to 1999; by 2001, those schools' performance had dropped to approximately the same level as economically disadvantaged students in the state overall.

- In Texas, CSR schools (with a high percentage of middle schools) have a higher Algebra I passing percentage rate than the state overall or for economically disadvantaged students statewide.

- The dropout rate for CSR schools is lower than the state average even though the CSR schools have a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students than the state overall. Economically disadvantaged student have a higher dropout rate. On the other hand, because most of the CSR schools with published dropout rates are middle schools, the lower rate is expected.



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- In Arkansas patterns were found to be very similar to those observed in Texas. Performance for students in CSR schools either track the state (with higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students) or show trend lines that exceed the state.

## 5.
## Summary: General Impact and Impressions

As noted, survey respondents could use either of two similar questionnaires—Survey Yes or Survey No. A set of general questions was included in both survey types (with some variations). These questions ask for respondents' overall opinions about the program's impact on performance, teachers, and parents. They were asked for other opinions such as whether the school's CSR model should be replicated in other school districts and if they thought it would continue to be implemented in their school. Table 26 presents the results from Survey Yes respondents whose schools are still implementing CSR models. The number of respondents for each question is listed in the far right column.

**Table 25. General Opinions Regarding the CSR Program: Model Still in Place (Survey Yes)**

| | Yes (%) | No (%) | Don't Know (%) | Total N |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Do you think this program should be implemented in other similar schools? | 94 | 3 | 4 | 80 |
| In retrospect, do you think this CSR model worked well for this school? | 92 | 9 | 0 | 82 |
| Would you implement this program if you went to another school? | 83 | 5 | 12 | 81 |
| Do you think this program will continue to be implemented in this school? | 76 | 6 | 18 | 80 |
| Do you still use the CSR vendor for support? | 66 | 23 | 11 | 82 |
| Has this program spread to other schools in the district or in nearby districts? | 64 | 25 | 11 | 81 |
| Do you believe that having a CSR grant had a positive effect on: | | | | |
| Student achievement? | 98 | 2 | 0 | 82 |
| Parental involvement? | 82 | 13 | 5 | 82 |
| Professional development? | 95 | 3 | 3 | 81 |
| Schoolwide reform? | 95 | 0 | 5 | 82 |

An examination of the data shown in Table 31 reveals that, overall, respondents have positive opinions regarding their schools' CSR programs. While 94 percent of respondents said that their programs should be implemented in other similar schools, about 10 percent fewer said they would choose to implement their programs if they went to another school. For this same question, another 12 percent said they were unsure, implying that assessing the school situation is important before making a decision about whether such a model would be appropriate. Almost one in five indicated that they did not know whether their CSR models would continue to be

implemented in their schools. About one-fourth said that they continue to use their models' vendors for support; roughly the same number believe that use of the models has spread to other schools.

The majority of respondents to Survey Yes believe their CSR programs should be implemented in other schools and that the models worked well in their own schools. Respondents indicated that the programs positively affected student achievement, parental involvement, professional development, and overall schoolwide reform. Fewer respondents)—but still a substantial majority (82 percent)—indicated that there was a positive effect on parental involvement.

Table 27 presents findings from Survey No. These respondents are from schools whose CSR programs are no longer being implemented. Overall, their opinions concerning CSR are somewhat lower than the opinions of those whose schools are still implementing CSR models. More than 90 percent of Survey Yes respondents reported that the programs were successful, whereas 71 percent of Survey No respondents believed that the programs were successful. Respondents of both survey types, however, said that the CSR programs had a positive impact on professional development.

**Table 26. General Opinions Regarding the CSR Program: Model No Longer in Place (Survey No)**

| | Yes (%) | No (%) | Don't Know(%) | Total N(%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Was the CSR program successful in this school? | 71 | 17 | 13 | 24 |
| Do you think this program should be implemented in other similar schools? | 63 | 21 | 17 | 24 |
| Has this program spread to other schools in the district or in nearby districts? | 67 | 29 | 4 | 24 |
| Would you implement this program if you went to another school? | 58 | 13 | 29 | 24 |
| Do you think the model selected for this CSR program was the best one? | 58 | 29 | 13 | 24 |
| Would you implement this program if funding were available? | 62 | 24 | 14 | 21 |
| Do you believe that having a CSR grant has a positive effect on: | | | | |
| Student achievement? | 88 | 4 | 8 | 24 |
| Parental involvement? | 54 | 38 | 8 | 24 |
| Professional development? | 91 | 4 | 4 | 23 |
| Schoolwide reform? | 75 | 17 | 8 | 24 |
| Did you use the CSR vendor for support? | 68 | 14 | 18 | 22 |
| If yes, was the vendor or model provider support effective? | 56 | 28 | 17 | 18 |

Approximately half (54 percent) of respondents from schools with discontinued models indicated that their schools' CSR programs had a positive effect of parental involvement, and 75 percent

said there was a positive effect on schoolwide reform. A larger majority felt that their programs positively affected student achievement and professional development.

All respondents were asked to describe the most important changes in their schools that resulted from their CSR programs. They listed several positive results for both schools with models still in place and those with discontinued models. None of the respondents indicated that negative changes have occurred as a result of implementing their CSR programs.

Schools that are no longer implementing their CSR models reported improvements in several key program outcomes, including: student performance, parental involvement, and teacher and staff participation and excitement, and quality of professional development. According to one respondent, "The program created a greater sense of working together among teachers and staff." School organizational changes also took place; for example, a respondent cited scheduling and staffing changes at the school. Another said, "Teachers have begun to meet as teams and to dialogue more. The school is also more aware of the benefit of providing one-on-one assistance to students."

Similarly, Survey Yes respondents indicated that several positive changes have taken place as a result of their CSR programs. Changes included improved student performance, valuable staff development, improved teaching strategies, greater availability of resources and materials, increased teacher and school staff morale, and increased parental and community involvement. The following are respondents' comments on outcomes:

- Teachers are forced to be better teachers, whether they want to or not.
- During this implementation, district personnel, parents, and students experienced the benefits of this research-based program through improved student attendance, grades, test scores, and self-confidence. As a result, the district reallocated federal funds to maintain the program.
- Scheduling was impacted because all teachers need to teach reading at the same time of the day. More staff members are aware of individual students and their needs. Staff as a whole are more aware of the process involved in reading instruction.
- Program has unified staff, particularly at the primary level, in strategies, goals, and cooperation.
- The greatest impact has been restructuring the math lessons to include the components of cooperative learning and higher order thinking.
- Our focus was on comprehension, thinking skills, problem solving, and student interaction. We accomplished these with much success.
- We have been much more efficient with our staff and the courses we are able to offer students.
- We have a greater number of students reading at or above grade level, and discipline referrals have decreased with the increase in reading abilities.

All respondents, including those whose models are no longer in place, reported that their CSR programs were integrated into their school improvement plans.

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**Conclusion**

This study reviewed the implementation status of CSR programs funded in the five states that SEDL serves: Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoman, and Texas. A total of 268 surveys were distributed to all CSR programs funded. The survey return rate was 40 percent. In addition to the survey, the evaluation team conducted 15 site visits to various schools across the five states. Researchers analyzed published student performance data as available, and conducted follow-up phone calls with selected schools as required.

Findings from this study indicate that, overall, the majority of the 268 CSR programs surveyed that were originally funded for three years continue to be implemented, some as originally implemented, some with modifications. School staff members are satisfied with the models selected, and the majority strongly support the programs. Although improved student performance is not evident in all CSR schools, those that have continued to use their CSR models are committed to them and feel that performance will improve after the models have been in place for several years. Aside from improved student performance, other significant other benefits were identified that help explain the support and continued implementation of CSR models. For many schools, the process of institutionalizing the models has already begun; for others, the models have reached the institutionalization stage.

Despite current funding challenges, many schools have modified their budgets to continue to support their CSR models. There was a general consensus among respondents that program start-up was expensive; however, ongoing costs decrease after the initial three-year period. Nevertheless, for models to be effective, schools still need to provide training, new materials, and staff to implement them. While many respondents felt that their school's model would continue indefinitely, some are worried that funding and support for their model could end at any time. In some cases, lack of funding has led schools to modify their models to such an extent that staff members are concerned about how these changes will affect the overall program delivery.

*General Observations*

Given the specific scope of study and the limitations already described in earlier sections several general observations can be derived from this study. these are listed below.

*Student Performance*. Student performance, however measured, is considered the singular most important outcome that should be considered when gauging the success of these programs. The examination of published student performance data did not reveal consistent large increases in student performance. However, modest gains were evident. More significant, when student performance data were examined during site visits (much of which were not formally documented,) outcomes not commonly captured in state reports (like the Academic Excellence Indicator Reports in Texas) were much more likely to be noted as a success measure by the program administrators.

*Funding*. Study findings indicate that the most frequently provided reason for program discontinuation was the lack of funding. Survey results and site visits, however, indicate though funding is a critical aspect of the CSR program, schools that went through significant changes (staffing, teaching strategies, scheduling) as a result of implementing their CSR models found a



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way to obtain the necessary (if minimal funds) to continue their programs. Regardless of their ability to secure continued funding, school staff continue to be concerned that reduced program funding might alter the CSR program to such an extend that the benefits of many of these models may be compromised by a diminished lack of funding.

*Commitment to Program.* Study findings indicate that CSR models are more successful when there is a strong commitment by school staff. The program was much less likely to succeed if it did not enjoy staff buy-in. To increase and ensure buy-in, schools included staff at an early stage of program implementation. Teachers were included as part of management teams. When necessary, staffing changes were made to ensure effective model implementation. Some schools reported that these programs were so ingrained in the school structure, system, and culture that it would be impossible return to a program that did not include the reform model.

*Parental Involvement.* While many schools with successful CSR programs indicated that the program had improved the communities' overall perception of the school, many described parental involvement as the weakest CSR component. The majority of school staff indicated that parental involvement, as related to their CSR program was not producing the desired results.

*Program Evaluation.* Like parental involvement, researches found that program evaluation activities are weak or lacking in several programs. Importance was focused more on ensuring implementation than in program evaluation activities.

## Appendix A:
## CSR Models Used in the Five States

4 Blocks of Literacy
Accelerated Reader
Accelerated Schools
America's Choice
Advancement Via Individual Determination
Basic School
Brazosport Model
Bridges/Structure of Intellect
Capacity Building Model
Cooperative Integrated Reading and Comprehensiion
Coalition of Essential Schools
Community for Learning
Comprehensive Accelerated Learning
Comprehensive School Mathematics Program
Co-Nect
Core Knowledge
Creating Independence Through Student-owned Strategies
Design for Literacy
Different Ways of Knowing
Direct Instruction
Early Literacy Initiative Project
Education Service Center XX
Effective Schools
El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence
Every Day Counts Calendar Math
Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound
Experiential Service Learning
Failure Free Reading
Galaxy Classroom
Great Expectations
High Schools That Work
Higher Order Thinking Skills
Learning Centered Framework
Lightspan
Literacy for All
Modern Red Schoolhouse
Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Training
National School Conference Institute
National Writing Project
Onward to Excellence
PLATO
Problem-Based Learning
Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum
Reading Recovery
Roots and Wings
School Development Program
Second Generation Effective Schools
Student Support Teams
Success for All
Ventures Initiatives and Focus System
Voyager Expanded Learning
Woodlawn Hills Comprehensive School Reform Design

## Appendix B: Letters of Support from State Departments of Education

## Appendix C: Site Visit Summaries

Albuquerque School District, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Eugene Filed Elementary School

Austin Independent School District, Austin, Texas
Regan High School

Bernalillo School District, Santo Doming, New Mexico
Santo Domingo Elementary and Middle Schools

Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District
Watkins Middle School

Edinburg Independent School District, Edinburg, Texas
North High School

Fort Bend Independent School District
Missouri City Middle School

Jefferson Parish District, Gretna, Louisiana
George Cox Elementary School

Jonesboro School District, Jonesboro, Arkansas
West Elementary School

Lawton School District, Lawton Oklahoma
Lawton Elementary School

Little Rock School District, Little Rock, Arkansas

Lubbock Independent School District, Lubbock
Dunbar Junior High School

Plainview Independent School District, Plainview, Texas
Houston School

San Antonio Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas
Irving Middle School

Tulsa School District, Tulsa Oklahoma
Gilcrease Intermediate School

Ysleta Independent School District, El Paso, Texas
Yselta Elementary School

**Eugene Field Elementary School**
**Albuquerque School District, Albuquerque, New Mexico**

**Initial funding and program implementation**

At the time of the site visit, Eugene Field Elementary School served 430 students in pre K–5 and has a schoolwide Title I program. More than 80 percent of students are Hispanic, and all qualify for the Free/Reduced Price Lunch Program. The school has English Language Learner and bilingual programs; the mobility rate is 126 percent, with several groups of students leaving and later returning throughout the year. The school is on probationary status, as determined by the New Mexico State Department of Education. In 1999 Eugene Field received $50,000 per year of CSR funding to implement the Design for Literacy (DFL) reform model.

A team of teachers, administrators, and parents began with the idea that the school needed additional funding to improve its reading program. In addition, a new district policy encouraged all schools to adopt a literacy model. Teams of teachers visited area schools implementing various reform models. Assisted by a consultant from the state education department, they selected Design for Literacy (DFL) because it was comprehensive and dealt with accelerated reading, remediation, intervention, and prevention. DFL's extensive professional development program includes classroom support for the teaching of literacy; appropriate instructional materials; and uninterrupted time for literacy teaching and learning. The program also includes strands for family and community involvement, school governance, leadership, and intervention. Teachers felt that DFL would give the school opportunities to create small learning groups of students and would address the needs of second language learners. The principal engaged university faculty and retired Title I teachers to help write the CSR grant application. Prior to implementation, all teachers went through intensive training. Teachers who did not want to be part of the reform were allowed to transfer to another school.

The school instructional council made all CSR funding decisions. During the first two years of the program, funds were used for professional development, classroom materials, and DFL library books. The district provided an instructional literacy coach.

**The post-CSR program**

Implementing DFL has improved instruction. By the third year, scores for every grade level had improved in all areas on standardized tests. Reading scores improved significantly. The school continues to implement and expand DFL (a similar program is planned for math); however, the program is at risk, based on current funding levels. After initial implementation, the cost of maintaining DFL decreased, but funds are still required for staff development and stipends. The district is supportive but unable to provide additional funds. The school has used Title I, operational, and School Improvement funds to support the program and has refurbished books and other materials needed for the program. Student/teacher ratios, small during the funding period, have increased.

Before CSR, teachers used a variety of instructional approaches. With DFL, there is more coordination in instruction, and more resources are available for literacy programs. Teacher turnover has been reduced. Teachers like the structure of the model, are excited about their students' accomplishments, and believe that they are making a difference. Instructional coaches



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model teaching strategies, provide assistance, and conduct weekly training sessions. The school no longer uses external training consultants.

CSR funding—and DFL—have positively affected both students and teachers at the school, as well as the larger community. The program has helped the school establish a comprehensive, state-of-the-art literacy library. Eugene Field has achieved a reputation in the community for being effective. Previously, the school did not attract students or good teachers. Now, parents want their children to attend and teachers want to join its faculty.

**Reagan High School**
**Austin Independent School District, Austin, Texas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
Reagan High School serves 1,300 students in grades 9–12: half Hispanic; 40 percent, African American. One-third of students are economically disadvantaged, and about one-fifth limited English proficient. The mobility rate is 33 percent. Reagan has a schoolwide Title I program. The school received $59,700 per year of CSR funding starting in 1999 to implement the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) model. That year, Reagan was rated "Acceptable" in Texas' accountability system.

The district applied for and received CSR funds to implement AVID in four high schools and four middle schools. AVID serves students with good grades in regular classes who show willingness to take rigorous course work and potential for graduating from high school and attending a university—frequently the first in their family to do so. AVID engages students as freshmen and continues to work with them through their senior year, focusing on collaboration and on writing, organization, and thinking skills. Students and parents sign contracts agreeing to the program's rigorous requirements. An initial challenge was selecting students who would benefit from participation in AVID. Over time, the school has fine-tuned selection criteria.

The AVID site team met monthly; the district AVID coordinator was responsible for routine decisions. CSR funds were used for teacher salaries, stipends, and staff development, as well as to establish AVID classrooms and furnish them with computers and printers. Program funds also purchased hardware, software, and materials for AVID students, and were used for field trips, primarily to area colleges and universities.

**The post-CSR program**
Although participating in CSR was not initially a campus-level decision, the Reagan staff now fully supports the AVID program. When CSR funding ended, the district worked with the Dell Family Foundation to secure additional funding to expand the program in all district high schools. Title V and Title I funds are also being used to maintain AVID. Reagan's principal is a strong and vocal supporter of the program.

Because AVID encourages students to enroll in honors and AP classes and helps them graduate and prepare for college, its goals align with overall campus, district, state, and federal goals. Part of its No Child Left Behind (NCLB) funds will be used to fund the AVID program. In addition, it appears that the district's Gear Up initiative intends to apply AVID principles in order to increase performance scores and to align with NCLB.

Though AVID has continued at Reagan, its operating budget has been significantly reduced, mainly for teacher training and student field trips. Curtailing field trips is of particular concern for these students, many of whom would not otherwise be able to visit universities. Nonetheless, Reagan's AVID program has become the largest in the district. AVID strategies are beginning to be used in all classes.

AVID has successfully increased the number of students taking reading and AP classes, and university entrance exams. Increasing numbers of students have enrolled in college. This year, 21 students from the first cohort who started AVID in grade 8 will graduate. All but one will attend universities. Reagan's financial aid office has helped to link them to financial aid systems

Teachers apply for AVID positions, which they consider rewarding because they teach motivated, college-bound students. They become surrogate parents and individual counselors, often working one-on-one with students. Still, with teacher turnover, it has been hard to maintain a professional knowledge base, and teacher training has suffered from lack of funding. While all teachers previously attended yearly training sessions, now only new teachers are now being trained by campus AVID teachers. This year Reagan has established Saturday training sessions to allow AVID teachers to coordinate and help each other develop lesson plans.

**Santo Domingo Elementary and Middle Schools**
**Bernalillo School District, Santo Domingo, New Mexico**

**Initial funding and program implementation**

The Santo Domingo Elementary School, located within the Santo Domingo Tribal Nation near Albuquerque, serves 350 students in grades 1–5. About 170 students attend the adjacent grade 6–8 middle school. One principal is responsible for both campuses. Santo Domingo Elementary, which has a schoolwide Title I program, was placed on probation by the state department of education in 1999.

The Title I director initiated the process for CSR funding, and the district paid for substitutes while teams of Santo Domingo teachers visited area schools serving students with similar demographic characteristics to select a model. They chose Success for All (SFA) for its emphasis on accelerated reading, remediation, intervention, and prevention. Subsequently, the principal pushed for its adoption. After much negotiation, 80 percent of teachers agreed; however, during the first two years, approximately 35 teachers left the school, due to dislike of the program, unwillingness to alter their teaching approach, or, according to the principal, a mindset that "our students—Native American, rural, second language learners—needed lower academic expectations."

Most CSR funds were spent for materials and, initially, for training. During the first two years, SFA was implemented without modifications. In the third year, the school "customized" the program: ESL components were introduced and SFA groups were established in the middle school.

**The post-CSR program**

SFA has not been diminished as a result of the grant ending—in fact, the program has grown and expanded. It has become so thoroughly integrated into the instructional delivery and culture in both schools that when CSR ended, discontinuing SFA was "not an option." The district continues to fund SFA facilitators. Additional basal sets were purchased so that students repeating SFA levels could read fresh materials, and Native American and local literature sources have been incorporated into libraries. A variety of funding sources currently provide the approximately $20,000 per year needed to operate SFA: district operating funds and incentives, Title I and Title VIII funds, and a 21st Century grant. The elementary school has also applied for the NCLB Reading First grant.

The elementary school currently remains on probation (and has been placed on Corrective Action); and program and school goals have not been met (100 percent of teachers proficient in SFA techniques and target increases in student performance on standardized tests). Still, interviewees agreed that the school's previously fragmented reading program has become stronger as a result of implementing SFA. The program has also helped teachers define and focus on reading and has enhanced cooperation among teachers. Students, now progressing at their own pace at appropriate reading levels, have also benefited. Third graders are currently the strongest class in reading (these students have been instructed using SFA techniques since kindergarten), and student interest in reading has increased. Daily tutoring sessions are available to all students.

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**Watkins Middle School**
**Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District, Houston, Texas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
Watkins Middle School serves 1,150 students in grades 6–8 in urban Houston. After notifying Watkins of eligibility for CSR, the district provided little additional assistance. In 1999, Watkins began receiving $109,648 per year of CSR funding for three years.

All educational decisions at Watkins are based on its three-part plan, which provided the framework for the selection of Creating Independence through Student-owned Strategies (CRISS) and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). The CSR committee researched models and examined results from schools with similar demographics. CRISS was chosen for its campus-wide focus and its potential for helping low SES and Hispanic students with writing and with test taking skills, and for its parent involvement component. Final selection of CRISS and AVID was made after input from the entire faculty, parents, and students. Student survey results led to the inclusion of two additional programs—Book It to the Library and a computer lab program—which allowed students to work on computer skills or conduct library research after school, supervised by staff members paid with CSR funds.

CRISS, a schoolwide generic reading comprehension program, is applied across content areas. AVID is a college preparatory elective that utilizes group tutorials facilitated by university students. A secretary, paid by the grant, kept records and accounts. Program decisions were made by the CSR committee. Initial expenses were related to teacher training, purchasing materials for implementing CRISS strategies, and setting up AVID classrooms. The district funded half (and later, all) the salary of an AVID teacher. First-year training for CSR programs included in-service sessions and follow-up activities such as lesson plan checks and classroom observations. Training continues on an ongoing basis, with experienced teachers training new ones. Teachers are encouraged to attend district workshops and state conferences related to CRISS and AVID.

**The post-CSR program**
Interest in the after-school library and computer programs waned after two years, and the committee deemed them no longer needed. Within three years, however, CRISS had become part of the regular school curriculum; teachers incorporate CRISS strategies into daily lessons, and these strategies have become part of students' daily routines. Costs have been "absorbed into school expenses." Three teachers have become national-level trainers: one for CRISS and two for AVID. Both programs are regarded as "strong" academically, but AVID is "struggling" with funding through snack sales, sponsored events, and donations. Watkins hopes to continue AVID because it provides opportunities not otherwise available to students. AVID students report that they have formed "family" bonds with each other, with their tutors from local universities, and with their teachers. Standardized test scores have improved, dropout rates remain low, and more minority students now take advanced classes. It is expected that the district will continue paying one FTE in support of AVID. Otherwise, AVID has been "cut to the bare minimum." This year, Watkins received support from NCLB after-school funds for tutoring; next year, however, there will be no NCLB after-school initiative. The district has not supported the program well since CSR funding ended, being "too far removed from the classroom to understand" the changes in the student population. Because funding is tight, the two classes per grade level of AVID may be

reduced to one class. In addition, the college student tutors may be dropped and required teachers to take over tutoring tasks during their conference times.

CSR-funded programs have contributed to an atmosphere change at Watkins, as the school moved from a punishment-centered approach to discipline to a "cohesive, caring family" environment for students. Teachers' attitudes toward students have changed, communication with parents has improved, and a sense of partnership has developed. Parent nights are viewed as very effective for encouraging participation of traditionally reluctant groups. After positive experiences, many parents have begun to volunteer at Watkins. Selection of Watkins as an AVID national demonstration school is attributed to the cohesive and effective functioning of the site team. This honor, plus inclusion in the Texas Mentor School network, led Watkins to apply for the Blue Ribbon Schools Program.

**North High School**
**Edinburg Independent School District, Edinburg, Texas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
North High School, located in the Texas Rio Grande Valley region, serves 1,900 students in grades 9–12, most from economically disadvantaged families. The Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin came to the district and presented the AVID program and its merits. North High School applied for the CSR grant. The area coordinator for AVID, based at Pan American University in nearby McAllen, has supported AVID at North and maintains contact with the Dana Center.

Prior to CSR, North's special programs concentrated on AP coursework and on recovery strategies for struggling students; little was offered for the average student. Although interviewees emphasized that AVID was for "the middle student . . . who can do better and can go to college," the principal characterized all AVID students as at-risk. Recruiting students is problematic because teachers, students, and counselors do not understand eligibility criteria. AVID is rigorous and demands more from students than the regular school program requires. The approximately 70 students selected for each grade level are encouraged to take AP courses and university entrance exams.

Staffing constituted the main cost for AVID. First-year implementation costs were highest because rooms were changed and furniture bought. Although second-year costs were lower, there were maintenance expenses for technology, networks, and printers, as well as expenses for training the staff and for Dana Center consultants, who provided annual training and one summer workshop during the three grant-funded years. The school paid to send staff members to Austin for training. The Intel Corporation donated computers and training, and Dell provided a grant to purchase laptops. Expenditure categories were shifted to buy computers for students' use.

**The program post-CSR**
Although the principal said that the program has not suffered from lack of grant funds, coordinators said that AVID is on "bare bones" and losing momentum; moreover, the absence of standardized test score increases has cast doubt on its continuation. This year, the AVID teacher who was interviewed donated some of her own time for AVID. She and others who are involved do not feel compensated for time spent on paperwork and after hours work. Because all AVID students qualify as at-risk, Compensatory Education funds are available, and perhaps will pay for the program if it continues. The principal added that current funding for AVID is now as an at-risk program and is coordinated with general AP programs. Gear Up, a schoolwide initiative for all students that is similar to AVID, has also been implemented at North. While the goals for the two programs are similar, the difference is that AVID is student-centered, is highly selective, and has more depth than the Gear Up program. It appears that AVID is competing for funds with Gear Up at the district level.

AVID has increased the number of North students enrolled in reading and AP classes. All AVID students graduate. Nearly three-quarters of North students have taken the university entrance exams—the most in the region. In addition, a greater percentage of students use computers as a result of AVID. AVID teachers have become mediators and advocates for students, who now

gain more recognition in other classes. On the other hand, schoolwide support is lacking. The program remains isolated and misunderstood. There is a resistance to change teaching styles, and non-AVID faculty members mistakenly perceive AVID as an at-risk student program. Training more teachers in order to make AVID a genuine schoolwide program was suggested as an improvement that AVID should make.

**Missouri City Middle School**
**Fort Bend Independent School District, Sugar Land, Texas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
Missouri City Middle School (MCMS) serves 1,200 students in grades 6–8 and has a schoolwide Title I program. MCMS received $85,740.00 per year starting in 1999 to implement four instructional models: Second Generation Effective Schools, Mastery in Learning, Second Chance Reading, and Just Read! The district administrator responsible for involving MCMS in the CSR program and selecting its models regularly visited MCMS to train teachers in their use. District-level staff development was also available.

**The post-CSR program**
Since the grant ended, no additional funds have been available to continue components of the models beyond what is supported within basic district and/or campus budgets. The most noticeable change when the grant ended was the curtailment of local summer institutes. These two-week institutes had provided intensive reading instruction for recommended students, as well as hands-on training for teachers, under the guidance of model providers.

The Just Read! model required paperwork that both students and teachers found overwhelming. In addition, some of the activities—such as book reports and proofreading of drafts—were beyond the capabilities and the interests of many students. Moreover, all the models selected for CSR funding were intended to target low socioeconomic status (SES) students—particularly those living in homes with someone other than their parents. Unfortunately, the parent involvement component seemed to attract only those parents who were already involved with the school and failed to attract the others. Efforts to keep components of the CSR-funded models "pure" and intact have been hindered by teacher turnover. In addition, the advent of the new state assessment system has distracted attention away from these models; most professional development is currently focused on what will enhance performance on these tests.

The original aim of the two reading models funded by CSR was to increase reading among students who had no interest in reading. Books with high interest and low reading level, addressing different cultures, were purchased with grant funds. These books, described by the principal as "phenomenal," are specially tagged and available to students through the library. Both the reading instruction and classroom management components of the CSR-funded models are considered beneficial for all students, with the possible exception of those functioning at the highest levels. Interviewees noted that many students had increased their vocabulary dramatically. In addition, cooperative learning groups have provided opportunities for students to become "mini instructional leaders—to take ownership of the learning and to go beyond what they'd normally do in a classroom."

As a result of CSR, there is more consistency in instructional strategies and higher level of awareness of campus goals. Teachers benefited from the "top-notch training opportunities" built into the CSR-funded models. Since the grant ended, teachers have trained each other. MCMS will receive a NCLB grant. Funds will be used to implement the AVID model and, if possible, the CRISS model. These models are expected to serve the high-poverty MCMS student population better than models implemented with CSR funding. Although interest has lagged

since the departure of the central office administrator who initiated the grant request and the librarian who was "cheerleader" for the program, strategies and competencies inherent in the CSR-funded models considered effective in improving student achievement will continue to be used in MCMS classrooms, in more or less attenuated forms. Several instructional strategies initiated as part of CSR—in particular, cooperative learning, pair-share, peer tutoring, read-aloud, and Drop Everything and Read—have been institutionalized. They were either incorporated into the MCMS Campus Strategic Plan, or they appear in lesson plans and in classrooms.

**George Cox Elementary School**
**Jefferson Parish District, Gretna, Louisiana**

**Initial funding and program implementation**

George Cox Elementary School serves 600 K–6 students in a community consisting primarily of apartment and temporary housing dwellers—nearly all are from low SES African American families; the school's mobility rate is 50 percent. The parish Title I office advised Cox to apply for CSR, with the directive to raise test scores. Otherwise, the program was implemented with minimal parish support. In 1998, three parish schools received CSR funding. The parish favored Co-Nect's technological aspects, and Cox followed suit for consistency—even though its principal preferred "other ways of knowing." Interviewees were favorably impressed with Co-Nect's Problem-Based Learning (PBL) curriculum because it encompassed a wide range of student abilities—important at Cox, where student characteristics drive the pedagogical approach toward a holistic and student-centered focus: incoming students had little or no readiness for grade level work, and homework was not a cultural expectation. Another CSR initiative, started at Cox in 1999, is HOSTS (Help One Student to Succeed).

The $50,000 from CSR paid for the Co-Nect license and for the consultant. Title I funds paid for three years of the coordinator's salary and all travel for staff development. Eventually, Co-Nect entailed additional expenses for its Critical Friends (CF) component. For training, teachers attended Co-Nect and CF conferences and a technology mini-sabbatical. A traveling computer lab was available, and training by the consultant.

Implementation was fraught with problems. First, teachers found it hard to create their own curriculum without clear structure. PBL uses a holistic approach that not all teachers are ready for; without textbooks they became insecure and nervous about their students' test performance. High turnover among teachers also caused problems. The coordinator said she felt ready for PBL by the time funding ended. Nonetheless, some projects described as "fabulous" resulted from teachers' and students' efforts.

**The program post-CSR**

Before CSR, Cox had participated in Accelerated Schools (AS), restructuring into four wings to create schools within schools. The PBL curriculum functioned well within the wings. Previously implementing AS had helped Cox to be ready for PBL. Most interviewees agreed that what could be considered "comprehensive" about CSR in their school was attributable to the work previously accomplished with AS.

Parish goals and the new Louisiana Educational Accountability (LEAP) system do not align directly with Co-Nect, yet Cox earned the "recognized" growth status for Louisiana's accountability system by achieving a significant increase in student performance on LEAP reading tests. Interviewees ascribe success more to AS than to Co-Nect. Recently, the NCLB initiative has driven the state's educational impetus and curriculum. The emphasis on testing creates conflict for teachers who are trying to implement PBL.

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Although Title I will pay for one more year of Co-Nect, interviewees saw little benefit in this expenditure. They liked Co-Nect, but they felt that too much emphasis was placed on technology. PBL has been institutionalized at Cox, to the extent that those trained in PBL are encouraged to apply it in the classroom and to adapt it to LEAP. However, high teacher turnover rates, parish-level budget reductions, lack of teacher engagement, readiness challenges of the student population, and conflict with the new accountability system have weakened Cox's commitment to Co-Nect/PBL. Still, interviewees would like to continue training and articulating PBL with the LEAP scope and sequence. Referring to LEAP's structured 10-year benchmark process, they agree that comprehensive programs such as CSR represent the only way to effectively serve their students.

After five years, HOSTS will remain in place (the 10 lowest performing schools in the parish were eligible for funding). HOSTS' success in enhancing student performance is a result of its assessment and diagnostics components, which are integrated into a student's individual educational plan and used to structure formal one-on-one tutoring. HOSTS, which currently serves 35 students, brings community mentors into the school every day.

Interviewees noted that because of the CSR effort, more students were interested in coming to school and learning, and that grant-funded programs were clearly benefiting students' performance, although data could not show a direct correlation between the program and academic performance. By contrast, the coordinator said that in hindsight, the $50,000 of the CSR funding was wasted, and that PBL was the only thing they have now without major expense. She felt that Co-Nect had misled the school by offering technology as panacea. External technical support was ineffective because teachers are not expert users. It was recommended that a network supervisor be part of the program for assistance and supervision in the lab and for repair and maintenance of hardware and printers. (Note: The Success for All programs selected the school as a pilot site and offered the program at no cost. Interviewees said that they were disappointed after their Co-Nect experience and tired of struggling to implement LEAP scope and sequence; thus they refused the opportunity.)

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**West Elementary School**
**Jonesboro School District, Jonesboro, Arkansas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
West Elementary School serves 400 students in grades 1–5 and has a schoolwide Title I program. The initial decision to participate in CSR was made by the West School Improvement Team and the Title I committee, working with the district-level program director to make sure that CSR would merge with other priorities and funding sources. The traditional approach was no longer working with West's student population, which was "changing drastically every year." After notification of the opportunity from the state department of education, a group from West attended a CSR orientation, where they identified the extended language arts block and parent component in Success for All (SFA) as appropriate for their students. Administrators did not attempt to "sell" SFA, recognizing that such a rigorous program would fail unless it had strong buy-in.

West received $50,000 per year starting in 1999 to implement SFA. SFA is expensive—the total cost for the initial year was close to $250,000—most of the $50,000 from CSR going toward the SFA contract, which includes the intensive on-site training. To supplement, the school used district, Poverty Index Program, and Title I funds. The district contributed a certified teacher/tutor. After the first year, CSR also helped pay for components of Lightspan math, and for Accelerated Reader and Math.

The SFA training sessions have been considered very helpful, as are the periodic external assessments of reading progress used for regrouping students. Still, some teachers initially did not like the scripted nature of the model; and the intensive pacing has been difficult to maintain for its 90-minute duration—after which all non-reading subjects must be "literally crammed" into the rest of the day. Another difficulty is that when students are placed at their appropriate level and follow the SFA curriculum for that level, they may not be exposed to material that appears on the state assessment for their grade. Finally, the fact that West has implemented a primary reading program other than the one adopted by the state has created difficulty for the school within the district.

**The post-CSR program**
After its third year, although test scores had not yet improved, teachers chose to continue with SFA because they believed it benefited students and they wanted to follow the original group through grade 5. Moreover, SFA materials, procedures, and staff members were in place, and there was no clear vision of a replacement for SFA. Ultimately, scores improved, and the program remains in place.

Programs have not suffered as a result of the CSR grant ending, due to skillful forecasting about what would be needed when the funds ran out, availability of Title I funds, help from the district, and lower annual program costs. Because LightSpan, Accelerated Reading, and Accelerated Math are relatively inexpensive, and because their use has become fairly standard, they will probably continue. However, paying for SFA will continue to be a challenge. Current funding comes mostly from federal entitlements. In addition, West will receive funding for the NCLB

after-school tutoring program. Even if not funded in future, the basic training and SFA strategies are ingrained enough that West teachers could continue using them without external support.

SFA is described as having "changed the entire school" by giving teachers a common vocabulary and approach, and encouraging them to regard students as "our kids." They work as teams—much as they have taught students to work in cooperative learning groups—and have developed support systems for each other. SFA assessment information available at regular intervals has provided a useful gauge of students' growth in reading. Because many come from chaotic home environments, West's students thrive on SFA's structure. The cooperative learning groups help to fulfill their need to belong, and built-in reinforcement, celebration, and conflict resolution are also important components. SFA consultants recognize the shift toward the state accountability system and have offered related sessions at their conferences, focusing more on student performance than on strict program implementation. West has also created documents aligning SFA with district benchmarks and with testing program. Positive achievement gains appeared this year. Some second and third grade classes had averages on the SAT 9 in the top quartile, for the first time. Although West's scores on the state assessment were still the lowest in the district, achievement gaps were smaller.

**Lawton Elementary School**
**Lawton School District, Lawton, Oklahoma**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
Lawton Elementary School serves 220 K–6 students—nearly all at poverty level. Lawton was rated low-performing on the basis of test scores and is eligible for schoolwide Title I funding. A state-level Title I contact invited Lawton to a presentation by CSR model providers and encouraged the school to consider adopting SFA. The principal and a teacher visited other schools implementing SFA programs and wrote the application.

Prior to CSR, teachers had worked separately, and the school environment lacked cohesiveness or a systematic approach. Interviewees were very positive about the schoolwide elements of SFA. They described SFA's comprehensive training as outstanding and commented on its excellent, individualized service. They agreed that the "user-friendly" providers were committed to serving Lawton. The state held yearly conferences for SFA schools to meet and share best practices. Although initial district guidance was minimal, support increased as Lawton demonstrated success. Interviewees said that SFA is so well organized and self-contained that it was fairly easy to implement. Initially the program had a "core" of supporters, while some teachers were resistant to change—many not liking the close interaction with students and parents. An additional challenge, teacher turnover, affected program continuity. It was suggested that the program should have some structure such as peer training to deal with this issue.

The coordinator characterized the CSR grants as a "lifesaver" because it paid for everything needed in the classroom as SFA was implemented. The grant money also helped expand the library. Costs remained the same for the three years of the CSR grant except for training, which was more expensive during the first year. Title I funds supplemented personnel costs and paid for materials. Other general funds paid for materials and conference attendance. Title I and state funds supported supplemental expenses. The school's high percentage of students from low income families qualifies it for additional support from the district.

**The program post-CSR**
The most important outcome for CSR was the harmony among all partners in education—community, school, and teachers—with a student-centered purpose. "The students have become our children and the school has become our school." School personnel now "speak the same language," and the school has become a community of learners, with educators working as a team. Children are better behaved.

Lawton's Academic Performance Index has shown gains, and student performance has improved as measured by SRA's eight-week assessments, Scholastic Reading Inventory, and CRT for grade 5. The ITBS scores for language arts have also risen since first year of implementation. There are concerns about math scores, but steps have been taken to improve those and the SFA math program. In addition, efforts focused on improving students' test taking strategies have been successful. Special education students were most positively impacted; still, all students benefited.

Campus educators chose to continue SFA for a fourth year with Title I funds because of its success in performance and in improving student behavior and parental involvement. This success has created much support for the program from parents and teachers. The school's poverty status has changed because higher income families are attracted by its good reputation. Lawton had been targeted to close by 2006, but now Lawton is used as a model for other schools in the district.

Nevertheless, next year the school must follow the district alignment to standardized assessment with the RF program (the district did not give the school an option to select SFA; they would have preferred that SFA funding last at least six years). Lawton's principal and program coordinator noted that if RF does not produce results as positive as SFA, they will find a way to reinstate SFA. SFA has been internalized and "no matter what," teachers are determined to continue training, scheduling, tracking data, and providing family support. They have the training and the structure for SFA, and they are committed to keep the program going. For year five, no funds are available for SFA contracts or materials. To save on expenditures, teachers have begun to reuse materials. SFA providers continue to consult at no cost on an informal basis, and the school will continue peer training to "build on what we have achieved" and ensure the continuity of SFA at Lawton.

**David O. Dodd Elementary School**
**Little Rock School District, Little Rock, Arkansas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**

Dodd Elementary School, on the outskirts of Little Rock, serves 212 preK–5 students and has a schoolwide Title I program. Dodd initiated its CSR application with assistance from the University of Arkansas-Little Rock (UALR), the Arkansas State Department of Education, and SEDL. Dodd received $50,000 per year starting in 1999 to implement the Reading Recovery (RR) model and the Futurekids model for technology enhancement.

Reading Recovery was implemented in combination with Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas (ELLA), a spin-off of RR utilizing "levelized" books, small groupings of students within classrooms, and a campus-based literacy coach working with teachers. To adopt that model, the principal had to contend with the district's strong support for a particular basal series and for the Success for All model. Futurekids, a technology-oriented literacy program, was also implemented, but proved too difficult for Dodd students. The program was dropped after the first year and replaced by an intermediate grade program utilizing the AlphaSmart word processing system.

Initially, the RR teacher and the media specialist made most decisions related to CSR funds. After the literacy coach joined the team, she assumed leadership. Teachers contributed to all purchasing and other decisions. Throughout the grant period, the most money was spent on materials, less on professional development and training, and the least on equipment. Title I funds have paid the RR teacher's salary, whereas CSR funds paid for teacher training, including conferences and courses. Grant funds spent for grades K–2 were related to changes in the classroom environment needed for the new literacy program: furniture, books, and materials; whereas purchases for grades 3–5 included AlphaSmart word processors, software, projectors, and other equipment. During the first year, funds also went toward staff development for the Futurekids program. After Futurekids was dropped, a consultant provided training for AlphaSmart, modeled teaching practices, worked with students, and assisted teachers in designing classroom activities coordinating literacy and technology.

**The post-CSR program**

CSR enabled Dodd to make a comprehensive reform of it entire school: "There is nothing that hasn't changed." The entire classroom setup is different, as well as the delivery of instruction. Levelized reading materials are centrally located and easily accessible. Discipline problems have dramatically decreased. Test scores have improved for first and second grade students, and students' writing skills have greatly improved. Since implementing the AlphaSmart system, Dodd educators consider their school to be on the "cutting edge." The technology program has helped to create a "community of learners; kids see teachers learning, and they see that learning is a lifelong activity." Annual Technology Nights provide opportunities for students to demonstrate to their parents the technology they use routinely. The number of parents who attend the school events continues to increase.

Now, all Arkansas schools must implement ELLA, which, combined with RR and the AlphaSmart program, aligns closely with the state, campus, and Title I goals. Dodd's programs

have not yet suffered as a result of the grant ending—despite the fact that Dodd is a poor school. However, over time, the programs may not be completely sustainable. Three Dodd teachers have been trained in RR methods. With the literacy coach, they will continue to provide the professional development associated with literacy at Dodd via informal lunchtime and after-school meetings that teachers attend voluntarily, and by modeling with students in teachers' classrooms. The district assisted Dodd in obtaining a NCLB Reading First grant, which will fund the literacy coach's position for three more years. Meanwhile, to pay for needed materials—particularly for the AlphaSmart systems and the consumables needed for the literacy program—beyond what it can afford with the Title I funds allocated annually (about $500), Dodd holds fundraisers and brings in additional money through campus sales of snacks. Funds from those sources will probably not be sufficient to maintain the current number of AlphaSmart systems over time. Moreover, funding for the literacy coach probably will not be available after the three years of NCLB funding end.

**Dunbar Junior High School**
**Lubbock Independent School District, Lubbock, Texas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
Midsize Dunbar Junior High School has changed in character due to resetting of boundary lines in the district. More than one-fourth of its grade 7–9 students are in special education. Most are classified as economically disadvantaged. The recent influx of students from a school that closed was evidenced by lower passing rates on the state exams and by increased referrals to disciplinary alternative education programs.

Dunbar initiated the CSR application after its principal, who was interested in moving beyond testing requirements to higher levels of student achievement, learned of the grant at a conference. The Charles A. Dana Center at University of Texas at Austin assisted with the model selection, whereas The Texas Education Agency provided support in submitting the grant proposal. Dunbar received $122,000 per year starting in 1998 to implement the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program. Dunbar staff members visited schools implementing the AVID program, and the campus AVID leadership team attended national training. Staff members both at the district and campus have other professional ties to AVID (either by serving on the AVID advisory board or by providing training). Given their level of commitment, AVID support of Dunbar's program is assumed to be very high.

The principal, with the involvement of the campus AVID leadership team, determined how CSR funds were spent: they supported an AVID teacher, program costs, instructional supplies, a counselor (partially funded by AVID), and travel for staff and students. Early in the program, some funds were used to purchase computers.

**The post-CSR program**
Interviewees were not only pleased with the program's impact, but also strongly support and advocate for the program. The decision to continue with AVID was never in doubt. Title I funds now support Dunbar's AVID program, and, thus far, little has changed in its functioning. All teachers on the campus have been trained in AVID approaches. Although overall district endorsement does not appear to be present, the presence of the principal and district coordinator (now associated with AVID, as previously noted) will likely ensure that financial and professional effort required to sustain the program will continue.

Because AVID has been vertically aligned across Dunbar's feeder elementary school and its receiving high school, elementary students are becoming familiar with AVID concepts and former AVID students are supported in the high school. On the other hand, maintaining parent involvement has proven difficult since the integration of students from the closed school. Moreover, the program at Dunbar faces difficulties in the next year because the lead AVID teacher/campus coordinator will be leaving.

Examination of expenditures over time shows relatively constant spending within categories such as travel and salaries, whereas spending for technology declined significantly. Dunbar receives Ninth Grade Success Initiative (NGSI) funding from the state, and AVID is also coordinated with this program. It is assumed that because Dunbar achieved a "recognized" status

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in the third year of its CSR program, AVID integrates well in serving a school with a high percentage of low income students. When boundary lines were redefined, however, the rating slipped. Moreover, the impact of the more rigorous state exams is yet to be observed, especially in light of the NCLB's requirements regarding adequate yearly progress.

Although the recombination of students from another school serves to occlude any benefits that might be seen in increased test scores, the previous rise in performance ratings is one indication of program success. Of 31 former AVID students at Dunbar who have recently graduated from high school, 30 have enrolled in college. Given the student demographics at Dunbar, this is a noteworthy accomplishment, even when intervening high school years are taken into account. Examination of Texas' Academic Excellence Indicator System reports revealed a pattern, as was expected, of increasing performance on state exams and a lowering of the dropout rate until the merging of the schools. At that time performance declined, including lower attendance rates. This confound makes it impossible to independently assess the impact of the AVID program across time at Dunbar.

**Houston School**
**Plainview Independent School District, Plainview, Texas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**

Houston School, located in a recently remodeled former shopping center, serves students in two distinct types of programs: an alternative education program (AEP)—a school of choice—and in a discipline alternative education program (DAEP). Middle and high school students attend class in separate areas of the facility. The high school AEP, which serves both as a credit recovery and dropout recovery facility, operates with two four-hour sessions; students may attend either or both. Although fewer than half of students are classified as economically disadvantaged, Houston's mobility rate exceeds 75 percent—far above the state average.

Prior to the CSR grant, students needing credit recovery or otherwise requiring an flexible environment (e.g., pregnant or parenting students) were transported to a school in a neighboring district, where they worked out of "packets" prepared by regular high school teachers. This approach contributed to high dropout and low attendance rates. The need for an alternative program located in the district was the impetus for pursuing the CSR grant. The Texas Education Agency provided support in submitting the proposal. Houston School received $162,000 annually over three years of CSR funding. These funds were used primarily to purchase 150 networked computers, for PLATO education software, and for staff training. While the principal has been primarily responsible for determining how CSR grant funds were spent, he has involved the counselor, who was instrumental in developing the grant, and instructional staff members in making these decisions.

The diverse needs of AEP and DAEP students, as well as their grade level range, necessitated a computer-driven instructional approach. After visiting other schools using PLATO, the principal and counselor determined that it would meet their students' needs and cost less than other systems. PLATO consists of self-paced instruction delivered primarily through interactive computer programs. A large number of subject areas and grade levels are available. Support provided by PLATO was very good, and technical problems were quickly addressed. All teachers at the school have received training in the use of PLATO, and one teacher was primarily responsible for the maintenance and operations of the system.

**The post-CSR program**

After three years, PLATO had become institutionalized; no consideration was given to discontinuing the program when the grant ended. All Houston School teachers have been trained in PLATO and incorporate the lessons into their instruction as needed. The only change was that interaction with the PLATO model provider is now restricted to issues regarding problems (which are reported to be few). At this time, local funds are used to support the AEP's PLATO program.

Many students now complete school who previously would not have graduated. With a decrease in dropout rates primarily attributed to this school, the program fits well with the district's goals. However, issues surrounding continued use of alternative accountability ratings (not supported by NCLB) may eventually present problems. The annual dropout rate performance (4.5 percent

for all students in 2001) is very reasonable for an alternative school, yet the same figures, under the standard system, could earn the school a "low performing" rating.

Graduation rates have improved, attendance is up, and fewer students drop out. Houston's teachers and counselors also said that the students' sense of pride had increased tremendously. Few students want to return to the regular high school. One student said that she would never have finished there, but was now graduating with honors and had been accepted into college. With the increase in graduation rate, the principal said that teachers felt better about being at the school, and were less likely to leave than previously. A sense of accomplishment permeates the school. There is typically a waiting list to attend the school.

As might be expected, parental involvement was not high at Houston School, especially for the high school. Some of these students are "on their own" or have less than positive home situations. Also lacking was a strong, formal evaluation component. The principal interviewed each graduate, but the information does not appear to have been incorporated in any formal manner into modifying the program.

**Irving Middle School**
**San Antonio Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
Irving Middle School currently serves 620 students in grades 6–8 in central urban San Antonio, where families are predominantly low income Hispanic students. Participation in CSR was a leadership initiative by a new superintendent facing the highest number of low-performing schools in the state and motivated to make changes. Previous school improvement efforts were described as unsuccessful "band-aid" approaches. The district encouraged a first cohort of 16 schools to apply for CSR grants. The original grants focused on professional development initiatives, and funds were funneled from national entitlements through the Texas Education Agency and disbursed by the district. Once the initiative was established, the New American Schools Design (NASD) institute was invited to come to the district to present a variety of models. The superintendent, who was familiar with NASD educational research, approved the models offered and provided leadership in the selection process. Irving's focus has been technology driven since the 90's, and thus the Co-Nect model was chosen to support this drive.

The CSR coordinator made spending decisions. Grant funds, supplemented by district Title I money, initially paid for computers, professional development for teachers, and classroom library materials. When the program changed in the second year to Problem Based Learning (PBL), CSR paid for training, computer hardware, and technical services. Other entitlement funds paid for professional development and class size reduction.

Although training in PBL techniques provided by the regional educational service center was considered good, teachers needed more time to absorb it. Eventually about half of the teachers were trained. The relationship with the provider was not sustainable without funding.

**The program post-CSR**
Interviewees agreed that the lowest achieving students were empowered as a result of CSR, and that their performance has improved since its implementation: "average" to "below average" students' motivation was most impacted because they experienced success for the first time and began to view learning as much more than "passing tests."

PBL reorganizes the classroom and demands preplanning. Thus participating in CSR shifted the teaching role away from textbooks and toward a learning facilitator role. Training helped teachers with accountability for learning. A teacher said that training transformed her life and that PBL should be for all students. Participation also upgraded the technological skills of teachers and students. Still, many teachers were resistant to the change.

The organizational focus provided by CSR has transformed Irving's culture and given the district a sense of confidence that every school can attain "exemplary" status in the near future. Despite this success, however, schoolwide, student-centered PBL efforts have diminished, and the practice is now used by only a few teachers. The new state assessment system is rigorous, and teachers hesitate to depart from its scope and sequence. On the other hand, technology in place as a result of the CSR grant continues to be a strong element in the school's identity.

**Gilcrease Intermediate School**
**Tulsa School District, Tulsa, Oklahoma**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
Gilcrease Intermediate School serves 450 students in grades 5 and 6. Students are predominantly African American and receive free/reduced price lunch. Before CSR, Gilcrease had a "Read 180" program that served 10 percent of its students. When the state department of education contacted the principal about the CSR grant opportunity, he was interested because the grant would increase student support with minimum district involvement. Based upon research findings showing effective educational programs for students similar to its population, Gilcrease initially opted for three models: Integrated Teaching Instruction, Great Expectations, and "resiliency strategies," which uses reading coaches and home visits. During the first year, a local university provided technical assistance. Expensive first year training required more funds than expected.

The second year, because student performance was not immediately impacted, Gilcrease chose to substitute Success for All (SFA) for the other models. Part of the appeal was the way SFA's structure provides a consistent curriculum. SFA training was comprehensive; a Tulsa consultant facilitated monthly trainings at Gilcrease.

**The program post-CSR**
SFA supports NCLB goals; however, standardized assessments such as ITBS and SAT 9 measure outcomes different from those of the CSR initiative programs. Gilcrease's principal said the district is going in a "different direction" from that of CSR. High student mobility—60 to 70 percent—has prompted a district effort to put schools on "the same page," to increase educational continuity. Thus the district has adopted a model of reform, the Tulsa Reads Program. Gilcrease's SFA program is no longer funded and has been discontinued. Similarly, at the nearby elementary school where SFA had been implemented for three years through CSR, the district considered the student progress under SFA insufficient and has since adopted the NCLB Reading First strategy. After their CSR grant period ends, leftover SFA materials will be incorporated into the general curriculum, but the program will not be continued. Interviewees would have preferred to stay with SFA because they found its characteristic progression to be engaging for students; however, now that the new schoolwide educational initiatives have impacted the school culture, there is "no way back."

Both Gilcrease and the elementary principal agreed that the CSR program's most important impact was its systemic change. Prior to SFA implementation, faculty resisted schoolwide programs; now most teachers support schoolwide practices. The elementary principal noted that, to maintain consistency, annual trainings had been necessary. To increase the program's effectiveness, he suggested that its structure should deal more effectively with teacher turnover.

With SFA, all students displayed great progress in the classroom, and "at-risk" students were energized and empowered by their learning experiences. SFA students were grouped into reading levels and progressed consistently. Teachers utilized classroom reading achievements as a visible and measurable growth tool for moving students to appropriate reading levels. Students were motivated by their sense of success and progression; attendance was positively impacted.

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**Ysleta Elementary School**
**Ysleta Independent School District, El Paso, Texas**

**Initial funding and program implementation**
Ysleta Elementary School serves 620 students in grades K–6—nearly all Hispanics from low SES families; more than half, bilingual. Although the school has a large migrant population, it has earned the "Recognized" rating for academic performance.

When the principal learned about the CSR funding opportunity at a district leadership institute, the school was already participating, with district support, in the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence ("the collaborative"), a partnership that included the Industrial Areas Foundations (IAF) and the Washington, DC based Center for Planning and Economic Policy (CPEP). The University of Texas at El Paso provides technical support. At that time, the school also had training grants and parent academies. Still, prior to CSR funding, there had been no effort toward schoolwide reform.

In 1998, the school received $50,000 for each of three years. The site-based management team worked with the collaborative to enhance the existing program and made decisions on expending CSR funds, which were used to furnish classrooms and to bring together culture and Reading Recovery approaches with a single focus on students' success. Previously, the collaborative's involvement at Ysleta Elementary had been paid by grants from the Texas Education Agency, by investment capital fund (IFC) and improving teaching and learning (ITL) grants, and by Alliance Schools challenge grants. CSR funds now paid for consultants who worked with these grants, for resources needed to build up classroom libraries, and for teacher training.

**The program post-CSR**
After CSR funding ended, continuation of activities was supported by local Title I funds and by state funds from ICF and ITL grants. The principal also recaptured and redirected funds. Members of the collaborative continue to meet and plan. CPEP provides the school with a consultant at no cost. Despite this support, more funds will be needed for ongoing training, staffing, and materials. Student success initiatives for reading academies and for math and science have been funded through Title I and II allocations, and Title III has served to support the program for bilingual education. However, there is concern over the potential issue of losing state funding, which would make it difficult to continue funding these important components of the school's curriculum.

Ysleta Elementary's program was designed by teachers and students. Its goals align well the Texas accountability system and with district, state, and federal goals. Although not yet reflected on state exams, the principal reported a transformation of teachers, students, and parents, who now "learn as a community." All have benefited. The program's approach is well suited for the bilingual education needs of students, and the 500 laptop computers donated to the school, networked with Ethernet, have benefited the at-risk students. Students see themselves as capable readers and are engaged in life-long learning habits. The parental involvement component has positively affected difficult-to-reach students and children of migrant workers. Parents are increasingly willing to spend money on books. Teachers now conduct academies for parents to learn to teach students at home—a dramatic cultural shift for these families. The coordinator said

that the classroom impact was "tremendous." Classroom libraries—previously limited—now include Spanish language books. Student performance is monitored constantly through pre- and post-testing observational reading components for primary grades and developmental reading assessment for all students. Teachers also have integrated student-directed projects into portfolio assessment.

Training, provided by the collaborative—initially at the central office and afterwards through summer institutes—is regarded as the most important and transformative factor in the program's success. Weekly meetings now provide ongoing learning, as teachers train their peers. As teachers continue to test the model in the classroom, the collaborative refines and integrates best practices into the program. Teachers have developed expertise in reading, in balanced literacy with bicultural awareness, and in language arts and literature, and are now considered adjunct professors at New Mexico State University. The school provides model teaching instruction for graduate students. The impact of this collaboration has spiraled from an isolated school's success to a model of teaching that addresses adjustments to the special needs of the population it serves. This program gains from its success, as it has obtained support from leadership within the academic and educational community. Possibly because of the IAF's role, this program also enjoys the support of residents and businesses of the city. Finally, the school's transformation has had a positive impact for all district schools that have embraced the collaborative model.

Nonetheless, there is frustration over the lack of continuity in policy mandates: "Every year is different." Variables beyond the school's control—lack of funding, teacher shortages, the superintendent's visions and directives, and federal and state mandates (e.g., NCLB and "the tests")—constantly seem to contradict previous initiatives. The state-mandated test is a particular challenge because it does not take into account a population's demographics (i.e., migrant students often bring very little knowledge). A particular challenge for the school has been the high teacher turnover and the high level of student mobility. Meeting this challenge requires cultural change. The situation has stabilized as students have experienced more success, and as parents have learned to try to keep their children in this school.

## Appendix D: Surveys

**Survey A: Schools should complete this survey if all or portions of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program ARE STILL IN PLACE in 2002-03**

**Please circle or check the best response. You may attach additional sheets for explanation as needed. Please leave response blank if you have no opinion or question is not applicable.**

1. *What is your position?* ___Principal ___Assistant Principal ___Teacher ___Program Coordinator Other _____

2. *How many years have you been in this school?* _____

3. *Is the person who originally put this CSRD program in place still employed in this school or in this district?*
_____Yes _____No _____Don't Know

4. *Is the CSRD program originally supported with federal funds currently being implemented in this school?*
_____The entire CSRD program is currently in place in this school.
_____About half of the CSRD program is currently in place in this school.
_____Only a small portion of the CSRD program is currently in place in this school.

5. *Please check the primary reasons why at least some aspects of the CSRD program are still implemented in this school. Check all that apply.*
____ CSRD program achieved successful student performance outcomes ____CSRD has strong support by teachers or administrators.
____ Funding for program was provided by local (or other) funds. ____CSRD program has strong parental support.
____ CSRD program is aligned with school goals. ____Other (*specify*) _____

Of these, which is the most important reason for program continuation. Please explain. _____

_____

6. *CSRD programs include nine comprehensive reform components. To what extent does your program implement the following CSRD components? Circle the best response. Please refer to a description of each component attached to this survey.*

| CSRD Components | To what extend did this CSRD program implement the following components? | | | Is this component still in place as it was originally implemented? | | Was this component effective in producing the desired results? | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fully Implemented | Somewhat Implemented | Never Implemented | Yes | No | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| Use effective, research-based methods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Use a comprehensive design with aligned components | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Provide professional development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Develop measurable goals and benchmarks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Have support within the school | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Have parental and community involvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Use external technical support and assistance | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Evaluation strategies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Coordination of resources | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**Please Return Survey by April 17, 2003**

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7. Which of the following three stages of school improvement based on the CSRD model selected did your program achieve? (See back of letter)

| Stages of School Improvement | Was this stage completed? | | In what year was this stage completed? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Initiation/Mobilization | Yes | No | |
| Implementation | Yes | No | |
| Institutionalization | Yes | No | |

8. *Please tell us how this CSRD program has changed now that CSRD funds are lo longer available.*

_____

_____

_____

9. *We are interested in your opinion regarding the CSRD program in your school. Please indicate the best response.*

| | Yes | *No* | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|
| Do you think this program should be implemented in other similar schools? | Y | N | DK |
| Has this program spread to other schools in the district or schools in nearby districts? | Y | N | DK |
| Would you implement this program if you went to another school? | Y | N | DK |
| In retrospect, do you this CSRD model worked well for this school? | Y | N | DK |
| Do you still use the CSRD vendor for support? | Y | N | DK |
| Do you think this program will continue to be implemented in this school? | Y | N | DK |
| Do you believe that having a CSRD grant has a positive effect on: | | | |
| Student achievement? | Y | N | DK |
| Parental Involvement | Y | N | DK |
| Professional Development | Y | N | DK |
| School wide reform? | Y | N | DK |

10. *Please rate quality of model used for the CSRD* **Poor** **Fair** **Good** **Excellent**

11. *Please rate quality of support received from the model provider.* **Poor** **Fair** **Good** **Excellent**

12. *Please rate, in order of importance (1 – 7,) which of these outcome measures are the best way to assess the effectiveness of the CSRD program on this school*

Student test scores_____ Student grades_____ School completion_____

Student portfolio_____ Parental involvement_____ Student engagement_____

Student attendance_____

13. *Are there any other outcome measures you would use to assess the effectiveness of this program? Please list:*

_____

_____

14. *Please describe the most important changes in your school that resulted from the CSRD program. For example, did or has the program impacted school organizational changes, reallocation of resources, staffing, scheduling, or student/teacher ratios.* _____

_____

15. *Did the program spend all of the money awarded to implement the CSRD program?* _____ *Yes* _____ *No* _____ *Don't Know*

*If NO, why were the funds not spent?* _____

_____

16. *How is the CSRD program currently funded?* _____

_____

*What percentage of these funds comes from the following sources?* Local funds ____% Federal Funds ___% Other funds ____%

17. *Was the CSRD program integrated into the school's School Improvement Plan and all other efforts toward continuous improvement?* _____

_____

_____

**Please Return Survey by April 17, 2003**

**Survey B: Schools should complete this survey if the Comprehensive School reform Demonstration (CSRD) program IS NO LONGER IN PLACE in 2002-03**

**Please circle or check the best response. You may attach additional sheets for explanation as needed. Please leave response blank if you have no opinion or question is not applicable.**

18. *What is your position?* ___Principal ___Assistant Principal ___Teacher ___Program Coordinator Other _____

19. *How many years have you been in this school?* _____

20. *Are the person(s) who originally put this CSRD program in place still employed in this school or in this district?*
____Yes _____No _____Don't Know

21. *How many years was the CSRD program in place in this school?* _____ *years* _____*Don't Know*

22. *What year was the CSRD program discontinued?* _____ _____*Don't Know*

23. *Please check the primary reasons why the CSRD program was discontinued in this school. Check all that apply.*
_____I don't know why the program was discontinued
_____Did not achieve successful student performance outcomes
_____Did not obtain local (or other) funding to continue program
_____ Did not align with school goals
_____Did not obtain adequate or quality support from model provider
_____CSRD Program was no longer needed
_____Other (*specify*) _____
_____Did not have support by teachers and/or administrator
_____Did not have strong parental support for program
_____CSRD Program was too expensive to continue
_____Chose a new model
_____Did not have adequate leadership

*Of these, which is the most important reason that prevented the program from continuing? Why?*_____

_____

24. *What would have made a difference so that the CSRD program would have continued in this school? Can you list any problems that could have been fixed?*

_____

_____

25. *CSRD programs include nine comprehensive reform components. To what extent did the program implemented in this school use the following CSRD components? Circle the best response. Please refer to a description of each component attached to this survey..*

| Did the CSRD program in this school | To what extend did this CSRD program implement the following components by the end of 2001? | | | Was this component effective in producing the desired results? | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fully Implemented | Somewhat Implemented | Never Implemented | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| Use of effective, research-based methods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Use a comprehensive design with aligned components | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Provide professional development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Develop measurable goals and benchmarks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Have support within the school | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Have parental and community involvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Use external technical support and assistance | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Evaluation strategies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |



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| Coordination of resources | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

26. *We are interested in your opinion regarding the CSRD program in your school. Please indicate the best response.*

| | Yes | No | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|
| Was the CSRD program successful in this school? | Y | N | DK |
| Do you think this program should be implemented in other similar schools? | Y | N | DK |
| Has this program been implemented in other schools in the district or schools in nearby districts? | Y | N | DK |
| Would you implement this program if you went to another school? | Y | N | DK |
| In retrospect, do you think the model selected for this CSRD program was the best model for this school? | Y | N | DK |
| Would you implement program if funding were available? | Y | N | DK |
| Do you believe that having a CSRD grant has a positive effect on: | | | |
| Student achievement? | Y | N | DK |
| Parental Involvement | Y | N | DK |
| Professional Development | Y | N | DK |
| School wide reform? | Y | N | DK |
| Did you use the CSRD vendor for support? | Y | N | DK |
| If yes, was the vendor or model provider support effective? | Y | N | DK |

27. *Please rate quality of model used for the CSRD program.* **Poor** **Fair** **Good** **Excellent**

28. *Please rate quality of support received from the model provider.* **Poor** **Fair** **Good** **Excellent**

29. *Please rate, in order of importance (1 – 7,) which of these outcome measures are the best way to assess the effectiveness of the CSRD program on this school*

Test scores_____ Grades_____ School Completion_____
Portfolio_____ Parental Involvement_____ Student engagement_____
Attendance_____

Are there any other outcome measures you would use to assess the effectiveness of this program? Please list:

_____

_____

30. *Please describe the most important changes in your school that resulted from the CSRD program. For example, did or has the program impacted school organizational changes, reallocation of resources, staffing, scheduling, or student/teacher ratios.*

_____

_____

31. *Did the program spend all of the money awarded to implement the CSRD program? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know*
*If NO, why were the funds not spent?* _____

_____

32. Which of the following three stages of school improvement based on the CSRD model selected did your program achieve? (See back of letter)

| Stages of School Improvement | Was this stage completed? | | In what year was this stage completed? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Initiation/Mobilization | Yes | No | |
| Implementation | Yes | No | |
| Institutionalization | Yes | No | |

*Was the CSRD program integrated into the school's School Improvement Plan and all other efforts toward continuous improvement?*

_____

_____



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**Site Visit Interview and Write-Up Guide**

Name of Interviewee_____

Position_____

Contact information_____

**CSRD District Coordinator/ School Principal/ CSRD Campus Coordinator**
This interview guide will be used for the school principal, the district CSRD contact, and the CSRD coordinator at the campus level. Not all questions are appropriate for each interviewee. Not all sites will have a unique person for each of these roles.

Thank you for participating in the evaluation study of the CSRD program conducted by. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL.) Academic Information Management, Inc. (AIM), a contractor, is assisting SEDL in conducting this study.

The primary purpose of this study is to identify the status of reform programs that received CSRD funds from 1998-2001. We specifically want to know the nature and status of the program, how it is working and how is it funded. How has it changed after CSRD funds were no longer available?

1. Please tell us about yourself. As a (PRINCIPAL/ADMINISTRATOR/COORDINATOR, ETC.) what is/was your role regarding the CSRD program?

2. How long have your been involved with the program?

**Program Implementation/Funding**

3. Who makes decisions about funding for the program (formerly funded by CSRD)? Is this the same person that made decisions when the program was funded by CSRD?

4. Can you tell me how much additional funding was requested for the program when the program was funded by CSRD? How much supplemental funding did you obtain for the program? What was the source for supplemental funding?

5. How did the expenditure of funds change over the course of the program (e.g., was more money spent on training in the first year, equipment in the second, etc.)? Also, have the categories of expenditures shifted now that CSRD funds are no longer available for this program?

6. Did you already have a similar program prior to CSRD funding?

7. What roles did the district and school play in the development of the funding applications? Did your school initiate the request to apply for funding or was this a district-level initiative?

8. Why and how did you select the CSRD model that was implemented in this school? Who was involved at the schools in the model selection process? Which criteria were used?

9. How did you obtain information on the models? What district level assistance, if any, did you obtain?

**Post funding questions**

10. Why did you decide to continue funding the program after CSRD funding ended? List the specific reasons why you chose to continue the program in this school.

11. How does the CSRD align with school performance goals?

12. How did you secure continued funding for the program? Did you apply for a new grant? Who was involved in this process? Was this a district or school level decision? Please indicate all current funding sources for the continuation of the CSRD program.

13. How do you coordinate funding for the CSRD program with other models or reform efforts taking place on this school? Describe the programs link to school/district goals, state goals, and national goals (i.e. No Child Left Behind.)

14. Are you a member of any consortium with other schools or districts to apply for funds to continue this program? If yes, how did you become part of this group and how is it working?

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15. How is the current program funded? Explain which of the following expenditures are covered by federal, state, local or other funding sources.

| Type of Expenditure | Federal | State | Local | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Administrative costs | | | | |
| Instruction | | | | |
| Staff Development | | | | |
| Materials | | | | |
| Capital Outlay/Equipment | | | | |
| Other | | | | |

16. Were there any unexpected costs directly attributable to the CSRD program? For example, additional materials, more in-depth training, etc. If possible, estimate the additional costs for each of these unexpected areas.

17. How has the program changed since funding ended? What aspects of the program are intact and what aspects were deleted or modified? Who is responsible for making these decisions?

18. With current funding, do you think the program is as successful as it was when it was supported by CSRD? What student outcomes have suffered? Why?

19. Did you have enough resources to continue to implement the program? Please explain.

20. For how long is the program funded? Do you think that the program will be in place for several years? Is it currently at risk of being dropped?

**Overall program effectiveness/Impact**

21. What is your overall impression of the CSRD program? What worked? What did not? What needs to be changed?

22. What kinds of changes, if any, do you see taking place in this school as a result of CSRD program?

23. What students does the program most positively impact? Can you give some examples?

24. What do you consider to be the one best outcome of the CSRD program?

25. What outcomes measures are available to measure the success of the program? These data will be requested by AIM towards the end of the month. Will you be able to provide this data?

26. How do staff members perceived the program? What do they like? What do they dislike?

27. Did you contract with a CSRD model provider or someone associated with the model for training? What is your overall impression regarding the model providers support and training? Can you tell me what worked and what did not?

28. Have you continued your relationship with the model provider? Do they still provide training? How has the training changed over the years of the program?

29. What level or amount of training is required to maintain the CSRD program? Are the training needs different now than they were when the program was first implemented? Are you able to meet the current training needs to effectively implement the program?

30. What measures can be taken to improve the effectiveness of the program? Can this be achieved with current funding levels?

31. There are nine CSRD implementation components. What do these components mean to you? How are these components implemented in this school? Can you give an example of how these are still being implemented in the CSRD program?

Use effective, research-based methods:

Use a comprehensive design with aligned components:

Provide professional development:

Develop measurable goals and benchmarks:

Have support within the school:

Have parental and community involvement:

Use external technical support and assistance:



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Evaluation strategies:

Coordination of resources:

Any other comments?

**CSRD Teacher (at some sites, a small group of teachers may be appropriate)**

1. Please describe your role regarding the CSRD program. How long have you been part of the program?

2. Briefly describe how the CSRD program has impacted your classroom.

3. How does the CSRD align with school performance goals?

4. Have you and other teachers involved in the CSRD program received adequate training?

5. What is your overall impression regarding the model providers support and training?

6. What is your overall impression of the CSRD program? What worked? What did not? What needs to be changed?

7. What kinds of changes, if any, do you see taking place in this school as a result of CSRD program?

8. What students are the most positively impacted by the program? Can you give some examples?

9. What do you consider to be the one best outcome of the CSRD program?

10. How do staff members perceive the program? What do they like? What do they dislike?

11. Do you feel the program is adequately funded? Do you get the support that you need to effectively implement the program on this school? Do you get district-level support?

12. How long do you think this school will keep this program? Why?

13. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us regarding this program, its funding or its effectiveness?


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**School Counselor**

1. Please describe your role regarding the CSRD program. How long have you been part of the program?

2. Briefly describe how the CSRD program has impacted students. Which students were helped the most?

3. How does the CSRD align with school performance goals?

4. What is your overall impression regarding the model providers support and training?

5. What is your overall impression of the CSRD program? What worked? What did not? What needs to be changed?

6. What kinds of changes, if any, do you see taking place in this school as a result of CSRD program?

7. What do you consider to be the one best outcome of the CSRD program?

8. How do staff members perceive the program? What do they like? What do they dislike?

9. Do you feel the program is adequately funded? Do you get the support that you need to effectively implement the program on this school? Do you get district-level support?

10. For how long do you think this school will keep this program? Why?

11. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us regarding this program, its funding or its effectiveness?

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